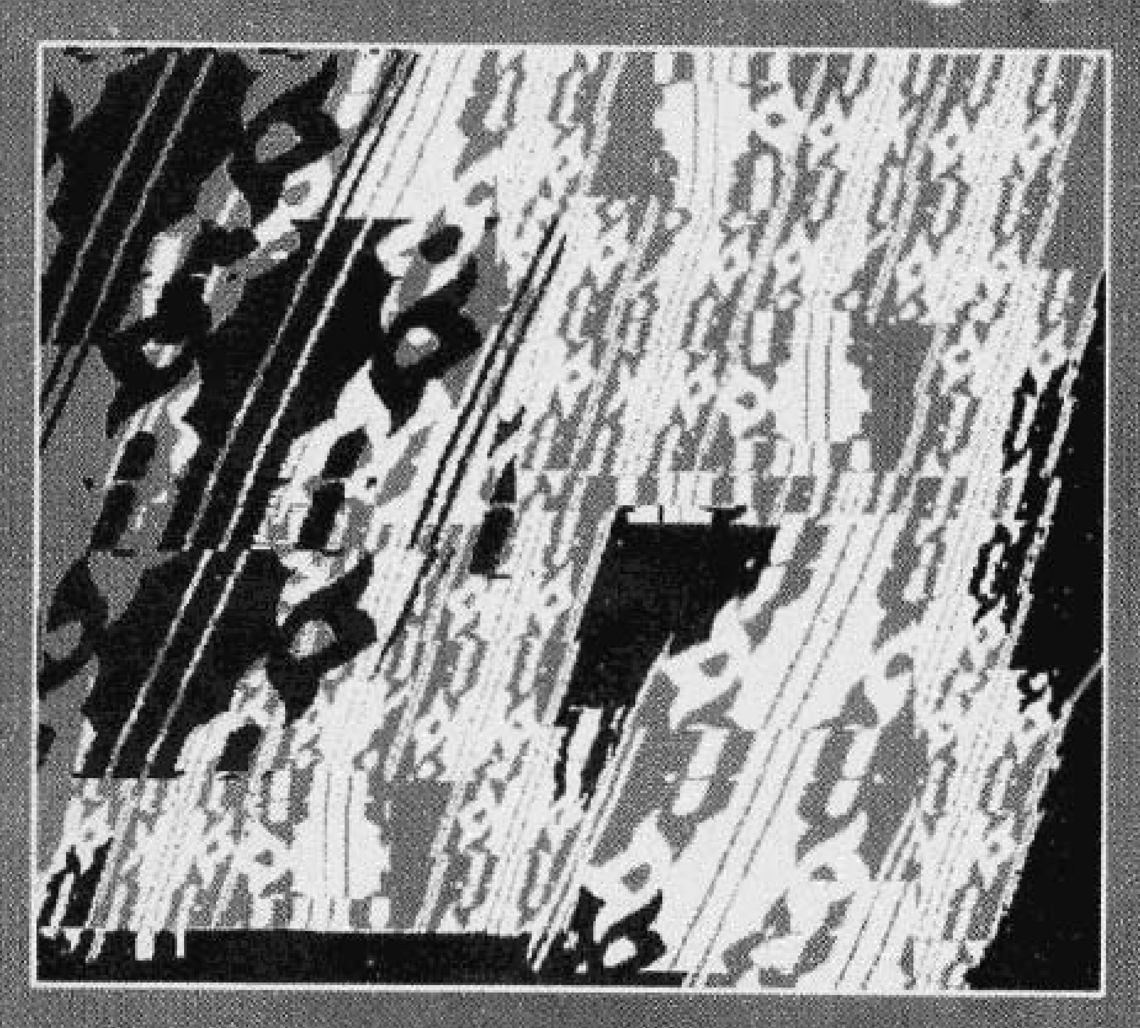
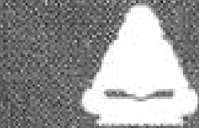
Values of ISLAM



Dr. M. Abd EL-Kader Hatem

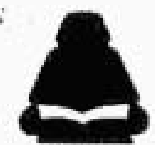


General Egyptian Book Organization

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Contentes

Preface

Perhaps one of best entries for the non-Moslem into the trusts of Islam, what it bestowed on understand the state of society in the region before the sun of Islam rose on this world' then one can better understand the drastic changes that the advent of Islam brought about in the lives of individuals and societies that were destined to live within its extensive realm.

The cradle of Islam the Arabian desert was separated into two empires, Byzantium and Persia. These people had given themselves completely over to heathenism, myths and constant fighting and bickering. They lived in diverse tribes, unceasingly struggling aganist one another for grass and eater. Sword alone was their means of restoring what they thought was right in all matters of life.

Prior to the advent of Islam, Western Europe had lost under the blows of the barbarians of Asia every symptom of discipline and unity, constant strife between the Roman empire (Byzantium) and Persia

had made it clear that those two States wouldn't stop until they had destroyed one another, in addition to the castastrophic effects their wars had left on the lives of people. In India, however, divisions between sects had caused poverty and ruination to spread almost everywhere, and in Chian, the growth of population created a situation that bore more dangers than advantages for settlement and security.

In such a world, at the beginning of the seventh century after Christ, Islam was destined to appear and to become in a surprisingly short time, a new power that depended mainly on Faith and legislation. This now power came out into the world to haul it away from the abyss of confusion and ruination, to de away with the chronic strife that raged in it, with its aimless bigotism, to restore discipline and unity to it and unleash the powers of creativity in the human mind.

To be brief in our description of the advent of Islam, we will say that it is a religion based on the call of God's Prophet Muhammad Ibn Abdullah who received God's revelation, to invite his people to believe in the Unity of God, and to obey this Unitary God who orders that justice be maintained and that charity and ethical conduct prevailed. Such teachings were the basis of the rise of a new nation which remained for eight centuries the only lighthouse of civilisation, and deeply affected the societies around it, and was the motive power behind the new renaissance in Western Europe in the Forteenth century through its conveyance and development of the sciences, arts and philosophies of the Greeks.

It was natural that the invitation to the new Faith, Islam, should be met by the heathen tribes of the desert and the civilized communities that lived on the fringes of this desert in the States of Persia and Byzantium with blunt refusal. This refusal was transformed into an unequal struggle between the new power, which had risen to spread the word of God, and to invite people to do good, and the powers of

heathenism and confusion which spread everywhere in the East and West and possessed all the sources of money and power of those days.

The people of Macca, where Islam had first appeared, went too far in hurting and fighting the faithful Moslems and the latter were obliged to emigrate to a small township on the way to Syria, called Yathrib (Al- Madina)

This emigration opened the whole world's doors before the new Religion and changed history's course and directed man's destiny into a new path leading to faith and to ultimate good, to progress and discipline after he had for centuries travelled amidst confusion, perpetually exposed to ruination and destruction.

Following are the most outstanding of these events:

1- In the year 622 A.D. the Prophet left Mecca emigrating to Yathrib (Al-Madina) Followed by two hunders of his followers. Al Madina received them warmly and with hearts overflowing with thankfulness. With the population of this small township, the first Moslem society was established.

2- In the years 630 A.D. after a hard struggle with the heathens, the Moslems of the Arab tribes, whom Islam had united, were able to conquer Mecca and to welcome its people into the Moslem Faith. Heathenism was terminated in the Arabian Peninsula and for the first time in history, its diverse tribes were united to form one nation.

3 - In the year 634, the Moslems scored a decisive victory over the Byzantine army in the battle of Yarmuk in which the latter army was torn to pieces and was never able to rally again.

4 - In the year 635 A.D. the Arabs entered Damascus amicably, as its people had accorded them their peace offerings and Heracles, the Emperor of Byzantium left Syria never to neturn.

5- In the year 637 A.D. the Moslems entered Jeruselem after having made their peace with heads of the church.

6 ` In the year 641 A.D. the Moslems conquered Persia for Islam, and the last of the Kings of Sassan fled.

7- In the same year, the conquest of Egypt was completed and the Arabs entered Alexandria after the troops of the Byzantine empire had left it for good.

8 - The Arabs then moved eastwards, west of Turkistan and towards India and China where they were met by the Chinese a few years later.

9- They also moved westwards all along the northern African coast till they came to the straits of Gibraltar.

10- In the year 710A.D., they crossed the straits of Gibraltar in response to a rescue call from one of the kings and this led to the conquest of both Spain and Portugal.

11- In the year 720 A.D. those conquerors reached the Pyrenees Mountains and southern France where they were stopped at the famous battle of Tour-they remained in southern france for about a centyry.

From this brief account, we are able to comprehend how far Islam had spread in approximately one hundred years. Entry of Islam into those countries was accompanied with the spread of the Arabic language among its inhabitants, so that the majority of their peoples voluntaruly and without pressure or coercion converted into Islam.

Moreover they offered the world a new culture and a brilliant civilization, which was for six centuries the only civilization that emanated light that guided humnity and directed it in all spheres of human endeavour.

And before we present to the reader a factual picture of the effect brought about by Islam and its spread in the world in this way, we would like to point out the unanimity of all western historians on the fact that the Moslems in conquering all these countries in such record time were not like various devastating conquerors that the world had known, but were devout and sincere people who belived in the unity of God and what scared commands of justice, charity and benevolence this faith had imposed on Man. The conduct of all those Moslem conquerors was basically different from that of all other conquerors known throughout the annals of history all over the world. They were all guided by the Holy Qur'an which stated that there was "No Coercion In Religion" (Sura 2: 256) So the Arabs would not impose conversion into Islam on any of the peoples conquered and so Christianity and Judaism which had formerly suffered the worst kinds of religious persecution and intolerence lived side by side with Islam in all countries that the Moslems had conquered. Moreover, those peoples were allowed to practise peacefully their religious rites and their places of worship were left intact and untouched by any destructive elements, and such unique conduct manifested itself at a time that had witnessed the worts Byzantine coercion and persecution as well as the Spaniards' atrocities and the persecution of Jews.

The bishop of Jerusalem wrote to his counterpart in Constantinople after the Arabs had entered Jerusalem: "They are distinguished by their justice. They are never unjust and they never use violence with us".

Perhaps the most concluive proof of the validity of the evidence given by no lesser person than the bishop of Jerusalem is the pledge, Signed by 'Umar Ibn Al-Khattab, the second of the Moslem Caliphs, to the people of Jerusalem who had opened the gates of their town to the Moslems who entered it in the year 637A.D. without shedding a drop of blood.

The Pledge says: "In the Name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate. This is 'Abdullah Umar Ibn Al-Khattab, the Caliph of the Faithful, offering to the people of Jerusalem".

- Security for themselves and their wealth.

- No parts of their churches or the areas they occupy are to be taken away and their wealth is to remain untouched.

-The people of Jerusalem are to pay tribute as people of towns do.

-Those of them who leave with the Romans are granted security for themselves and their wealth till they reach their destination of saftey.

- And those people of Jerusalem who choose to go with their wealth with the Romans are safe to do so till they reach their safe destination.

- And those of them who belong here can stay on if they so wish; they are then treated the same as the inhabitants of the town, but those who wish it can go with the Romans or return to their people.

- Nothing is to be taken from anybody till they reap their harvest.

This pledge is further ascertained by the following oath:

"The contents of this inscription bear God's pledge, his Prophet's good name, and that of the Caliph's and the Faithful".

When that pledge was published, all Palestinian towns hastened to make peace, and so Ramleh, Lidd and Damascus became parties to the pledge and the peace-making. The people of all such townships were pleased with what they witnessed as the pledge given them by the Moslems was so faithfully observed, that Umar apologised to the bishop of the orthodox church of Jerusalem for not praying in the church when prayer-time came and he was invited by the bishop to pray in the church, for fear that the Moslems might consider that a "Sunna(1)',

and would do in the immediate future and for posterity what their caliph had done and thus go against the security pledge offered by Umar; so he prayed outside the church on a carpet they placed on the ground for him to pray on.

The incident of 'Umar's apology for not praying in the church lest the Moslems would follow in his steps was indeed a unique novelty in the annals of religions and their relations with one another, relations based on mutual pledges and cooperation with the understanding that there is absolutely no coercion in religion as Islam had guaranteed an utterly free choice of faith for all-non-Moslems.

The slogan that the Moslems raised in all their conquests was that those who chose Islam would have precisely the same rights and the same duties as all Moslems everywhere and that those who chose to stick to their religion would only pay the tribute to help preserve their interests and safeguard their security in their interests and safeguard their security in their respective countries and lands'. This tribute however was considerably less than the excessive taxes the Byzantines and the Persians had levied, the latter, as history records, had fallen too heavuly on people with the extremely high taxes they had imposed.

The caliphs invariably advised their military leaders to show respect to worshippers generally and to those bent exclusively on worship in monasteries and places of worship in particular. They also counselled them to respect the lives of women, children and the elderly, and likewise everyone that would not partake in fighting, destroy a fruiting tree or ruin built-up areas.

Islam had in this way been able to win over the peoples of the conquered countries who willingly and voluntarily converted into Islam and enjoyed its protection. Scarcely had a few years passed when the peoples of all these countries were in their near totality Moslems who spoke the language of the Arabs and accepted Islamic rulings in all manner social, economic and political aspects of life.

We will now talk of the effect the emergence of Islam had on a world so anly described in the words of G.H. Wells, the well-known western historian in his book "An Outline of History".

Scarcely had two centuries passed when Islam spread its wings to embrace an area stretching from the Atlantic Ocean in the west to the frontiers of China in the east, south to the heart of Africa and north to the heart of Russia. And instead of the conquerors being soldiers and generals' they were now traders and men of science who called on people to believe in and uphold the unity of God, and they carried the people with them through good counsel, sagacity, exemplary and noble conduct. It was thus that the Islamic way spread into the heart of Africa and in the Far East as far as the coasts of Japan.

Coupled with this spreading out of Islam, there was an active and effective cultural and scientific revival that was indeed remarkable in those times. In the year 922 A.D. the famous book Merchant Ibn Nadim listed the books that had so far appeared in Arabic in philosophy, astronomy, mathematics, physics and medicine and the listed publications took up to ten volumes of the large size.

And in Arab Spain (Andalusia), there were established in "Cordoba" a number of universities that attracted students from different parts of the world in both the East ad the West, and the library of the city contained hald a million books.

In Cairo however, the Caliph established a library in which he collected two million books, an amount that was twenty times more than what the old world-renowned Alexandria library contained.

In the year 980 A.D. Al-Razi, the Moslem physician published a book on the principles of surgery which remained a reference on the subject for several centuries.

The mathematician AL-Bairony explained the theory of the earth's rotation around the sun and Al-Hassan Ibn Al-Haitham discovered the

rules of vision and carried out experiments with mirrors and lenses circular, cylindrical, and cone-shaped in order to determine longitudes and latitudes.

Ibn Sina (Avicenna) had his books on medicine published to be taught in European universities till the seventeenth century and Arab, Christian and Jewish scientists of different races cooperated in the biggest translation movement witnessed throughout the ages, and translated all Greek books into Arabic, and then it was all conveyed to Europe to become the basis of the Renaissance era.

All along the Moslem countries, in villages ad townships, schools by the thousand were opned and millions of boys and girls enrolled; they sat on little rugs and were taught reading and wrting verses of the Qur'an till they knew them all by heart, they gradually increased their knowledge of the language and mathematics, the motive behind their learning being always sincere and self-inspired. General eduaction in Arab Spain was free for all and in 960 AL-Hakkum the Second opened twenty-seven schools for the children of the poor and in Cairo, Kallawoan established a large school for orphans in which every child was offered a daily pound of bread, a dress for winter and another for summer.

In higher education students were given free meals, suitable salaries and were again given residence in the upper storeys of the school building free of charge.

The way to education began in mosques which were not merely places of worship but were also rostrums for science and knowledge where both were strongly and sincerely advocated and where again the most famous seminars in the history of science were conducted.

THose seminars, however, were open to whoever wished to attend, be it man or woman. Visiting professors and scholars invariably attended to partake in the discussions and to exchange knowledge with

other colleagues and scientists in the different branches of science and knowledge.

The Love of acquiring books became a general tendency on which Caliphs and scientists were so keenly bent, and in the year 890 A.D. the number of libraries in Baghdad was more than a hundred. Calipha emissaries roved round the world in search of books as Caliph AL-Aziz of Cairo did. He had established a library that boasted 1,600,000 volumes of which 6500 manuscripts were on mathematics and 18.000 on philosophy, and so did statesmen and ministers in general. History tells us that Minister AL-Mahallaby left after his death in 936 A.D. a collection of 117.000 volumes and that Minister Ibn Ayad collected 206.000 books in his library and that one of his judges had a library of 1.050.000 books.

The motto that all Moslem scientists raised in all corners of the great Moslem world was "the book" which was their mediator in politics and "the pen" which was their ambasador to peace. In this connection, the story told about Caliph Harun Al Rashîd who insisted upon conquering Amouria, that for peace to be made, AMouria would have to hand over all its old Greek manuscripts in Order that he would have his men translate them and the knowledge in them be disseminated is a unique example personifying this avid and commendable desire for learning. There was a sweeping general feeling that knowledge was the road to glory.

This feeling for science and knowledge had sprouted in all Moslems as a direct result of the teachings of Islam, for Praphet Muhammed had called on every Moslem to work unceasingly at acquiring knowledge and to keep at it from the cradle to the grave. He had said to his disciples, "Search for knowledge even if it be in China, that scientists' ink weighs the same as martyr' blood".

The contacts of the various cultures of the numerous countries that took up the Moslem Faith offered this marked movement of thought

and revival of learning a constant vividness that protected Islam from stagnation and equipped it scientifically to develop the intrinsic powers of the diverse societies that took up the Faith in their daily life and in what responsibilities they took upon hemselves.

Medical treatment was a necessity for the protection of those societies, and to protect the millions of their inhabitants against epidemics was inded a sacred duty. And healing medicines required intensive scientific research, and meating the needs of millions of citizens required varied and wide-ranging studies of irrigation systems, of seed sawing, of agriculture, of astronomy, so journeys were organised and books and studies were laid down for them.

The Arabs were among the first of all nations to show a zealous care for the building of hospitals and sanitariums which they equipped as best they could and on which they expended in as much the same way as we do now with one major variation, namely, that those Arab hospitals treated people gratis, no charge whatsoever. What is mone, they gave them on leaving hospital enough money, clothes and food to ensure a convalescence period that would guarantee their physical and spiritual comfort.

We conclude this preface with an objective evaluations reached by one of the most famous German orientalists Dr. Ziegfrild Honkah who said that history demonstrates hones a few cases of people who treated their adversaries or those who avowed a different faith as well as the Arabs did. Their conduct had produced the best of effects and this in turn had made it possible for the Arab civilization to penetrate so deeply and with a success that neither the Greek nor the Roman civilizations had enjoyed. Fate, she said, which the Arabs made with their own hands, willed that their empire should be the stage of a dazzling materilistic civilization, accompanied by a flourishing cultural and scientific movement of Thought. Moreover, its geographic situation made it possible for it to become at once an international trade

centre as well as a centre of Culture, a situation that considerably enhanced the exchange of thought and its uses and brought peoples so close together.

This leap onto the ladder of civilisation by the children of the desert, who had literally started from scratch, is a phenomenon deserving of great esteem when one thinks of the history of man as a whole. Their scientific discoveries which made them masters of the civilised nations of their age are indeed unique and induce one to stop, look and wonder how it happened that a people who never before played a civilized or a political role in man's entire history could one day be the teachers.

One of the reasons this book is written is to answer this question and uncover the secret of this excellence which the Arabs had so markedly shown over others. We would like to state at the outset that the Arabs did not at any time or in any battle outnumber their adversaries in men or equipment. They never had behind them material power to support them against the huge armies of the old Byzantine or Persian empires. Their voctories against both were due to the spirit instilled in them, that spirit that comprised those values which Islam had imparted into their souls. These values are the subject matter of this book.

The Author

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Chapter 1

Belief in God

The belief in God represents in Islam the fundamental principle which regulates all man's work, thought and conduct. No work or endeavour is acceptable without this belief. God almighty says in the Holy Qur'an:

"Those who adopt, with God, another God: but soon will they come to know". (Sura 15: 96).

Any action or thought that ousts the belief in God from the life of man is considered a wrong deed and leads to heresy.

FAith in God entails two other fundamentals:

Faith in the Day of Judgement and pious works.

God, be He Exalted, said: "Whoever believe in God and the Last Day and work righteousness, surely their reward is with their Lord, on them shall be no fear, nor shall they grieve", (Sura 2:62)

1. As to Faith in God, it is both a force that guides man to do right and to obey God, as it also deters him from evil and compliance with his passions. It is the safe refuge to which man can repair when he is overwhelmed with a perilous issue or afflicted with suffering.

Faith, as the basis of spiritual values, is the source of moral strength for both the individual and the community. For this reason, it is the most potent factor in promoting and stabilizing the unity of the latter.

In this connection, the Prophet (P.B.U.H.), is reported to have said: "The common unity between one believer and his brother in the Faith is just like a structure, the parts of which are closely knit and inseparably joined".

There is in the Holy Qur'an a superb style that inculcates the creed and cultivates the Faith in the heart of man. The mind is directed to the Signs of God in the universe, and the response is emphasized in the human soul. Also, attention is focussed on the sources of knowledge that can, thereby, be attained. God, Glory be to Him says: "And in the earth are signs for those whose faith is sure. And (also) in yourselevs, can you then not see". (Sura 51: 20-21).

This educational approach is most effective in developing the mind of man, enabling him to grasp the wonders of God's Creation of this universe. He would thus perceive the Omnipotence of God who watches man's actions, and is "Well-Aware of the tricks that deceive with the eyes and al that the hearts of men conceal." (Sura 40: 19)

Such direction to the Signs of God is made in progressive steps, starting with what is felt by the senses, until it goes to what is thought out after deep reflections. Sometimes the Qur'an appeals to the mind to consider the creation of camels, the heavens, the mountains, and the earth.

God, be he Exalted, says: "Will they not regard the camels, how they are created? And the heaven, how it is raised high? And the mountains, how they are set up? And the earth, how it is spread out?" (Sura 88: 17-20)

In other verses, the Holy Qur'an draws man's attention to the alternation of night and day, the ships plying across the seas, the rain falling from the sky, and the change of the winds. God, the Almighty says: "Behold, in the creation of the heavens and the earth, in the difference of the night and day, and the ships which run upon the sea with that which is of use to men, and the water which God sends down from the sky, thereby reviving the earth after its death, and dispersing all kinds of beasts therein, and (in) the ordinance of the winds, and the subjected clouds between the sky and the earth; (here) indeed are Signs (of God's Sovereignty) for people who have sense". (Sura 2: 164)

Repetition is one of the educational methods to fix in memory facts and items of information. For this reson, the Holy Qur'an reiterates, directing the senses or the mind to grasp fully the verses mentioned, stating that they are meant for sensible people. "Verily, in this are Signs for men who reflect". "Herein indeed are Signs for people who have sense". "Therein is indeed a Sign for people who take heed". (Sura 16: 11,13).

An interesting feature that draws man's attention to God's Creation is the fact that the Holy Qur'an appeals alterntely between making use of the senses and deep eflection, as in God's Saying" "Will they not regard the camels, how they are created?" (Sura 88: 17). The same is in His Other Saying: "Have they not considered the dominion of the heavens and the earth and all that God has created". (Sura 7: 185)

Then the Qur'an enjpoins man to consider what is related to himself: The stages of his growth, the elements from which he had been created". (Sura 7: 185).

Then the Qur'an enjoins man to consider what is related to himself: the stages of his growth, the elements from which he had been created, his destiny after wordly life, and the bounties of hearing, sighting, and the felling that God had bestowed upon him.

God, be he Exalted, says: "It is He Who brought you forth from the wombs of your mothers knowing nothing, ad gave you hearing and sight and intelligence and affections that haply you might give thanks". (Sura 16: 78)

Islam urges man to think carefully about the mysteries of the universe, so that he might admit, through reflection, the existence of the creator, and gain belief in His Unity and Omnioptence. Islam pursues the establishment of the Articles of Faith until they become deeply rooted as a firm belief, so that man's relation it God is made increasingly closer. This is to be attained through two basic fundamentals: 1, worship, which is the mainstay of religion 2, the remembrance of God, in which the hearts of men do find solace and relief.

It is also to be noted that the reinforcement of mutual spiritual relations amongst Muslims would realize their unity and strengthen their holding fast to the Rope of God.

The method adopted by the Holy Qur'an to implant Faith in man's heart, is the ideal educational one, because it makes Faith arise from the depths of man's soul, and from his own personal reflection. In this way, Faith would not be thrust upon him from the depths of man's soul, and from his own personal reflection. In this way, Faith would not be thmust upon him from the outside, given in a superficial tradi-

tional way without the depth, or roots which reinforce that Faith and lead to its flourishing.

In addition to the influence of religious faith in education and moral concertnent, it has also another impact related to the launching of investigations dealing with the mysteries of the universe. This discernment of the Signs of God is thus made a means to the acquisition of knowlwdge and the furtherance of scientific research which would certainly lead to the progress and welfare of makind.

When scientific inquiries are pursued in conjunction with sane belief and Faith in God, these sciences would be directed towards righteousness and noble conduct.

As regards this point, teachers and preachers are enjoined to abopt the approach of the Holy Qur'an in inculcating Faith in God. In attempting to implant that Faith in the hearts of the young, teachers have to adopt the subject-mater to the various educational stages, the mental capacity of their pupil, and the scope of their experience. They have to discard the method of memorizing which is far from affecting the inner feelings of their souls.

Community of faith, as a bond linking men together, is considered as more powerful and enduring than others claimed by sociologists as of no less equal strength such as the bonds of language, racial stock, identity of aims, and so on so forth; since these are rather based on common interests which are liable to be transient and subject to change. Hence, they cannot provide security and peace to mankind.

The basic fundamental to exemplary life is the one that emerges from the heart of man, furnishing him with an ideal, an ultimate and spiritual aim. The essential bond that links closely the members of a sane society is faith in God to which the Holy Qur'anic verse refers: "Verily, this is my Straight Path, so follow no other ways, lest you be

parted from his way. This has He ordained for you that you may be righteous". (Sura 6: 153)

Faith in the Last Day:

This faith is a potent factor in educating the conscience of man, and making him perceive his destiny in this wordly life, thereby calling himself to account for what he had done. This is the most efficacious preventive force against evil, worng-doing, and aggression; because if man knows for certain that he would be raised up after death and that he would be brought to account for both his good works and sins, this belief would deter him from evil, and urge him to comply with the dictates of morality.

Some people from amongst those who had strayed from the right path, entertained doubts about resurrection after death. There are numerous references to these doubters in the Holy Qur'an.

God, the Almighty, says: "They swear by God their most binding oaths (that) God will not raise up those who die. Nay, but it is a promise (Binding) upon Him in truth, but most of mankind know not". (Sura 16: 38)

The unbelievers claim that they shall surely not be raised up again; say: Yea! by my Lord! You shall surely be raised up: then You shall be informed of that which you did; for that is easy unto God". (Sura 64: 7).

"And they say: What when we are bones and fragments, shall we really be raised up as a new creation?" (Sura 17: 49)

Similar argumenets concerning these doubts are also mentioned in other Quranic verses.

Yet the Holy Qur'an adduced substantial proofs drawn from historical events. God, be He Exalted, says: "Or (bethink of) the like of him who, passing by a township which had fallen into ruins ex-

clamied: How shall God give this township life after its death? And God made him die a hundred years; then brought him back to life. H said: how long tarried? (The man) said: I have tarried a day or part of a day.." (Sura 2: 259)

In Suratul-Kahf (The Cave) there is a detailed narrative showing God's Omnipotence, in raising up the youths whom God brought about their death and who tarried in their Cave three hundred years and nine more.

Then the Holy Qur'an put forward the rational proofs drawn from the manifold aspects of God's Omnipotence in creation, concerning which man is urged to perceive and consider.

As regards the creation of man, the stages of his growth and old age, and the giving of life to earth after its death. God, Glory be to Him, says: "O mankind! If you are in doubt concerning the Resurrection, (Consider) that We created you from dust, then from a sperm, then from aclot, then from a little lump of flesh shapely and shapeless, that We may make (it) clear for you. And We cause what We will to remain in the wombs for an appointed time. And afterward We bring you forth as infants, then (give you growth) that you may attain your full strength. And among you there is he who is brought back to the abject time of life, so that, after knowledge, he knews nothing. And (further) you see the earth barren; but when we send down water thereon, it does thrill and swell and puts forth every lovely pairs. This is so, because God is the Reality: it is He Who gives life to the dead, and it is He Who has power over all things. And verily, the Hour will come: there can be no doubt thereof, or about (the fact) that God will raise up all who are in the graves". (Sura 22: 5-7)

In Surat Al-Kahf are also adduced further substantial proofs to those who deny Resurrection. God, the Almighty, says: "But they wonder that there has come to them a warner from among themselves. So the believers Say: This is a strange thing. When we are dead and

have become dust (shall we be brought back again)? That would be a far return." (sura 50 : 2-3)

"Have they not then observed the sky above them? How We have constructed it and beautified it, and how there are no rifts in it? And the earth have We spread out and set thereon mountains standing firm, and produced therein every kind of beautiful growth (in pairs); to give sight and as a reminder for every penitent servant. And We send down from the sky blessed water whereby we give growth to gardens and the grain of crops, and lofty date-plams with ranged clusters; provision (made) for men, and therewith We quicken a dead land. Even so will be the resurrection of the dead." (sura 50: 6-11).

In the last Qur'anic verse: "kadhâlika al-Khûruj", means that, as God that quickened lifeless land, men would be raised up after death, because fertilizing the mawât, (barren land) is similar to the raising up of the dead.

Pious Works:

These inevitably result from faith in God and the belief in reckoning on the last Day. It is because the one who believes in God is bound to worship and praise Him. Besides, he admits that God, the Alimghty, is the source of all goodness. Anything righteous that a man does, would be rewarded by God. This is confirmed by what the Almighty, is the source of all goodness. Anything righteous that a man does, would be rewarded by God. This is confirmed by what the Almighty says in His Holy Book: "Whatsoever good you send forth for your souls, you will surely find it with God, better and greater in recompense". (sura 73: 20).

"And whatsoever good thing you spend, it will be repaid to you in full and you will not be wronged". (sura 2: 272).

Pious works and commandment for their accomplishment are mentioned in the Holy Qur'an in a considerable number of verses. God, be

He Exalted, says: "Whosoever does good, whether male or female, and is a believer, him verily We shall quicken with good life, and We shall pay them a recompense in proportion to the best of what they used to do". (sura 16: 97).

"And whoever hopes for the meeting with his Lord, let him do righteous work, and make none sharer of the worhip due unto his Lord". (sura 18: 110).

"Whoso does an ill-deed, he will be repaid the like thereof, while whoso does right, whether male or female, and is a believer, (All) such will enter the Garden (of Bliss), where they will be nourished without stint". (Sura 40: 40).

Believeing in Islam extends to include belief in God, in his unity and His ability that knows no bounds. It also includes belief in angels, in the sacred books which He descended upon his Prophets (Messengers) and belief in all those massengers with no discrimination between one and another, and finally belief in the afterlife in which everyone is given his due for what he did in this world.

In consequence of this inclusiveness, Faith and Legislation play their role in straightening human life into channels that God Almighty have chosen for it, channels that lead to benevolence, good deeds and progress.

This Faith has played at the beginning of the existence of Islam an important role in transporting Arab tribes who had lived for interminable centuries in adversity and strife, paying no heed except to their own tribe's rights and completely ignoring the rights of others, making aggression and looting their way to achieve their goals. This new Faith transported them from selfoshness and aggression to cooperation and caring for others, and those early Moslems invariably held to their Faith in God to protect themselves at all times against any deviation. This led them to the road of benevolence and virtue, and in

their belief in what God had promised the strugglers for his cause , early Moslems were able to score such great victories on forces that far outnumberd them in men and equipment through ways and means that were indeed a lot more civilised and considerably more praiseworthy than the whole history of man had ever known.

This new Faith has struck in the spirits of Moslems a balance between the interests of the individual and those of society in an exemplary way. Examples of those early Moslems invoking their Faith in God in their common everyday's life are indeed plentiful; they would rise five times a day since before the sunrise until after sunset and after dark and at night- to pray to God, and in each of those five prayers, the Moslems face God, the Merciful, the compassionate with unbonded thanks, the God who ressurrected people after their death and who had seen fit to create the Day of Judgement. Then they pray to God to guide him to the straight path of benevolence and good.

One example that is told of this feeling in the heart of a Moslem is the stroy told in the rule of Umar, the seccond of the Moslem Caliphs, about a woman who wanted to mix-milk with water before selling it. Her daughter saw her when she was about to do that and said that Islam prohibited such cheating, and that the Emir of the Faithful had ordered people to stop cheating milk by mixing it with water, and the mother replied:

"And where are we from the Emir of the Faithful now! And how can he see us and he is asleep in his house and we are in ours?" and the girl replied:

"If the Emir of the Faithful can't see us, God can".

Belief in God Islam realises balance and social justice for this belief in God and what He had decreed of being just, charitable, good and benevolent and what else the Moslem Faith decreed of forgive-

ness and tolerance, of purity brotherhood and modesty, had realized physical, spiritual and social excellence in the individual in whom all tendencies were so well balanced and harmonized.

This by no means indicates any belittling of life on this earth, because God- as Islam states- has created man to live on this earth and to enjoy the good in it without indulgence or extravagance, or on the other hand miserly and avaricious behaviour. God says in the Holy Qur'an:

"But seek with the ealth, which God has bestowed on you, the Home of the Hereafter, nor Forget your portion in this World: but do good, as God has been good to you, and seek not occasions for mischief in the land, for God loves not those who mischief". (sura 28:77).

Again God decrees that Moslems are to cleanse and adorn themselves when going to any mosque.

Prophet Muhammad spoke of the social function in Islam when he stressed the aims of socialism. He then said: "No man becomes a true follower of the Moslem Faith unless he wishes for his fellowman what he wishes for himself". (Bukhari and Muslim).

The function of the State in Islam is not confined to keeping law and order, providing defernce and justice, but the State is also charged with the task of safegurding Religion, as in the zealous safeguarding of such spiritual values lies the strongest guarantee of realizing justice, economic and social balance among individuals and societies. A Caliph or Imam must be the epitome of faithfulness, meticulously following God's orders and directions in establishing justice, equality, mercy, and other attributes of benevolent conduct.

Upholding such principles by Islam does not mean a bigotry denial of the rights of followers of other faiths for Islam has decreed that followers of other Faiths in the society are to be justly and equitably treated, they are given all national rights granted to Moslems; they en-

joy the same rights and carried out the same duties. Islam even transcnded that and went beyond mere equality when it ordered Moslems to genuinely befriend them in excatly the same way a Moslem loved his fellow- Moslem. It absolutely prohibited hurting them by word or deed. The Almighty says: "God forbids you not, with regard to those who fight you not your faith, Nor drive you out of your Homes, From dealing kindly and Justly with them, For God loves those who are Just." (sura 60:8).

Islam then allowed followers of other Faiths to practise their religious rites, to declare their Faiths and to be judged according to their different Faiths in all personal matters.

In looking at other peoples, Islam set a genenral rule: All peoples of all nations, races, and colours are equal in the eyes of Islam. Moslems or Arabs are not preferred to others.

Preference between individuals and nations is based only on modes of behaviour and invariably goes to those that are most benevolent. The Almighty says: "Mankind, we have created you from a single (pair) of a male and a female, and have made you into nations and tribes, that you may know each other (Not that you may despise each other). Verily the most honoured of you in the sight of God is (he who is) the most Righteous of you. And God has full knowledge and is well aquainted with all thing". (suran 49: 13).

The Prophet (P.B.U.H.) said: "All people are equal, the same as a comb's teeth. No preference is given to an Arab over a non-Arab or vice-versa except through his fear of God".

The State's care for religion and its preservation of it does not mean the establishment of a theocracy, the monopolization of religion, or ruling people despotically in its name, for Islam did not create an intermediary between man and his Creator but made it the right of all

men to worship God directly and without intermediaries. It gave no one authority over others in matters relating to religion but made all men equal in such matters. Religion was made for all people and no party or class of people could claim monopolization of it..

Faith in Islam brings forth reassurance into a Moslem's life and his earnings, so that he may not be overbearing when those earnings increase or desperate when they decrease or are indeed little, so Faith to a Moslem is his custodian against greed, harted, and envy and his protection against psychological and nervous illnesses which are generally caused by excessive worry, tension, fear or despair.

Again the Moslem Faith prevents the Moslem from committing a wrong deed or a vice. A true Moslem does not commit murder or adultery; he does not steal, cheat or deceive. Prophet Muhammed of Islam said in this connection that a murderer or an adulterer does not commit his foul deed when he is faithful, meaning that Faith is snatched out of his heart when committing it. In the Holy Qur'an the Almighty promises those who have been good to inherit the earth and to control all things in it for he says in the Holy Book:

"God has promised to those among you who beleive and work righteous deeds, that He will, of a surety grant them in the land, inheritance (of power) as he granted it to those before them, that he will establish in authority their religion- the one which He has chosen for them, and that He will change their state after the fear in which they lived to one of security and peace. They will worship Me (alond) and never associate anything with Me." (sura 24: 55)

It is the faith of the early Moslems in this Divine promise that lay behind all those early Moslem's astounding victories against the heretics of Quraish who possessed the wealth and weapone of the Arabian Peninsula and the defeats they inflicted on the armies of the Byzantine and Persian Empires.

Obtainment of Faith:

Now if Faith occupies this topmost position in Islam, it becomes incumbent on us to speak of Islam's theory on the obtainment of Faith and how man can possess it so that he may communicate with God and identify with benevolence, justice and charity that He ordains, and with which He promises man of mercy and good in this life as well as the hereafter.

Here we should differentiate between two groups of people, the majority, and these get their faith comparatively easily, for these are brought up on what their fathers have been, and their faith settles and grows roots into their spirits becoming indeed an unshakable structure that is both strong and deeply-founded, and fills their hearts and spirits with reassurance, making a Moslem capable of bearing with hardship and grateful for what God offers, tolerant with what life brings on and never despairs of God's mercy. God to him is the help that comes to the helpless. He sees him in everything and is aware of him at all times. To him God is the ultimate in everything, in dignity and glory, in strength and despair, in justice, wisdom, benevolence and mercy, and all of the other sublime, virtuous and benevolent goals.

And there is the faith of the few, who do not hold their faith except after thought and conviction, and who measure all their beliefs with the criteria of the mind, and of logic. Islam did not reject the principle underlying the attitude of these few, but on the contrary proclaimed it, and its philosophy contained abundant proofs of God through logical and mental processes.

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Chapter 2

Men

We have taken up first Faith in God' the main basis on which Islam, as a religion, and a creed that half the believers in Divine religion in our world believe in and uphold. From this main basis all other humanitarian and ethical values sprouted to establish the Moslem society. But we will begin our talk on the values of Islam with man himself, he, being the first of these values. We will also try to estimate the position man holds in Islam, and what God Almighty has bestowed on him of comfort and esteem. The Almighty says in the Holy Qur'an, "We have indeed created Man in the best of moulds,". (sura 95:4).

By the first part of the verse, the Almighty means that He has disinguished, cognition, and all the other attributes that He has bestowed on man alone, over all other creatures. The Almighty says: "Behold, your Lord said to the angels: "I will create A Vicegerent on earth,' They said: "With will you place theirin one who will make mischied herein and shed blood? Whilst we do celebrate your praises and glo-

rify your Holy (name)?' He said" 'I know that you know not". (sura 2: 30). Man's heritage of God on earth means man is to inhabit the earth and to prosper through spreading benevolence and peace, and through working at revealing the greatness of the Creator and His powers, by uncovering the secrets of whatever He has created. For man to be able to realise all that, God has singled him out of all other creatures to endow with the ability to learn, and to store what his senses have perceived so that he may attain through this, recognition of things and peculiarities. So the Almighty says: "And He taught Adam the names of all things, then He placed them before the angels, and said: 'To complete man's heritage of God on earth, He subjected all of his creatures to him so that their usefulness to him would be complete. Such usefulness man would attain in two ways; through the laws of nature which God made to meet man's needs. The Holy Qur'an expresses that in the verse: "It is God who has created the heavens and the earth and sends down rain from the skies, and with it brings out fruits wherewith to feed you; it is He Who has made The ships subject to you that they may gail through thesea by His Command and the rivers also has he made subject to you." (sura 14: 32). The second way of subjugating other creatures to man is through the latter's ability to learn, which God has bestowed solely on man. Through this ability man can subjugate other creatures to his will and direct them to where his good lies and his needs are met. The Holy Qur'an has given expression to all that in God's words: "It is He who has made the earth manageable for you, so traverse you through its tracts, and enjoy of the sustenance which He furnishes: but to Him is the Resurrection." (sura 67: 15). The Almighty then says: "Do you not see that God has subjected to your (use) all things in the heavens and on earth, and has made His bounties flow to you in exceeding measure, (both) seen and unseen? Yet there are among men those who dispute about God, without knowledge, without guidance, and without a Book to enlighten them?" (sura 31: 20).

man's position in the eyes of God according to Islam is seen in the Almighty's order to his angels to kneel to Adam, the first of men.

The Almightey says: "It is We Who created you and gave you shape, then We bade the angels prostrate to Adem, and they porstrated, not so Iblis (Satan), he refused to be of those who prostrate." (sura 7:11).

Supremacy of men over all other creatures is further ascertained through God's giving him of His spirit, for He says: "Behold! your Lord said to the angels: I am about to create man, from sounding clay, from mud moulded into shape". (sura 17: 28).

Satan's refusal to prostrate to the first of men was considered a blasphemy for which he was thrown out of God's honoured mercy by the Almighty when He said to him: "Dwell with you wife in heaven." (sura 2: 35). Whether we took heaven here in the physical sense or as a symbol of comfort and spiritual happiness, it is a forgone conclusion that without this feeling of spiritual content, material comfort is of no value.

With such an understanding of either meaning of the two mentioned above, we come to recognize that when God had Adam and his wife dwell in His Paradise, they lived a good life in secure content and spiritual happiness till their enemy Satan bewitched them into disobeying the Almighty so that they might fall in his hands, ad he might destroy what relationship they had with God, as all Divine Books have expounded.

Islam, assuming such an attitude, conducts itself in a way that holds man in high esteem. It recognized how Adam had met God's grace with erring, a thing about which God says in His Holy Book: "So by deceit he brought about their fall, when they tasted of the tree, their shame became manifest to them, and they began to sew together the leaves of the Garden over their bodies, and their Lord called to

them: "Did I not forbid you that tree, and tell you that satan was an avowed enemy to you?". (sura 7: 22). This is a kind of reproach in which tolerance is evident, and which opens the doors wide for forgiveness and pardon. In their response, Adam and Eve, the first parents of man said: "They said: Our Lord: we have wronged our own souls: if you forgive us not and bestow not upon us you Mercy we shall certainly be lost." (sura 7" 32).

Another gracious estimation of God for man is manifest when a great error is weighing heavily on man's soul, filling it with despair and a terrible sense of guilt, a things that dispells all man's spiritual peace. When such a situation closes in on man, invariably God's mercy envelops him, lighening the heavy weight of his error. THe Book of Islam, the Holy Qur'an syas: "And remember Moses said to his peoples 'O my people! you have indeed wronged yourselves by your worship of the calf: so turn (in repentence) to your creator, and slay yourselves (the wrongdoers); that will be better for you in the sight of your Creator. Then He turned towards you (in forgiveness) for He is oft-Returning, Most Merciful."

The principle of gracious tolorence is inherited by Adam's offspring, whenever they do themselves some wrong or deviate from the right path. The Book of Islam, the Holy Qur'an sayd: "When those come to thee who beleive in our Signs, say Peace be on you, your Lord has inscribed for Himself (the rule of) Mercy: verily, if any of you do evil in ignorance, and thereafter repented and amended (his condnct) he is All-Forgiving, All Merciful". (sura 2: 54). As for the goal behind the creation of man; it is just God's worship, but to understand what worship is, and what lofty noble meaning it has in Islam, we will relate here what God said about his worshippers. The Holy Qur'an says: "And the servants of (God) Mosy Gracious are those who walk on the earth in humility and when the ignorant address them they say: Peace. Those who spend the night in adoration of their Lord, prostrate and standing, those who say; Our Lord avert from us the

wrath of Hell, for its wrath is indeed an affliction grievous. Evil indeed is it, as an abode, and as a place to rest in." (sura 25: 63-66). "And those who pray, 'Our Lord!, Grant unto us wives and offspring who will be the comfort of our eyes, and give us (the grace) to lead the righteous". (sura 25: 74).

This is worship's content, and the qualities of God's worshippers. All such qualities ure knowledge of the Almoghty, and His obedience which, at once and the same time, are the constituents of man's life and the essence of all benevolence and virtue. Knowledge and obedince of the Almighty includes man's relationship with God, his relationship with fellow-brothers in humanity which is based on friendliness and non-aggressiveness, and on taking the path that leads to cooperation between men and observance of the lives and rights of others. Here then worship is not an isolated action separated from life, men, and benevolence, but rather the basis of all good virtuous living.

We move on now to another quality, which God signled out man to bestow on. This, according to Islam. is the 'freedom of will' which emanates from his knowledge and his mind, and these two are gifts God had given exclusively to man, and to none of the other creatures. The concept of 'will' is made abundantly clear in God's saying to Adam: "We said: O Adam! dwell you and your wife in the Garden and eat of the beautiful things therein as (where and when) you will, but approach not this tree, or you run into harm and transgression," (sura 2: 35).

It would have been possible, if God wished it, to keep them from eating of this tree, but what He wnated was to grant them the freedom of choice, so He said "from wherever you wished" and gave the choice of either obedience or disobedience according to what their knowledge and free will led them. Thus, if we knew that Islam considers that "knowledge and will" are amongst God's numerous qualities which He has not bestowed on any creature but man, we would

get to realize how highly He viewed 'man's position and value, and if the first of men had misused this freedom and disobeyed God's order, such disobedience had opened the door For repentence leading to further Godly blessings which He showered exclusively on 'man' and which are manifest in His Forgiveness, Penance and Pardon, and 'man' had come out of it with a new knowledge, and that is, Satan's animosity to him, to estrange him from his Creator God Almighty.

Penance, Forgiveness, and Pardon are among the basic factors that the Prophet brought to the world according to God's wishes. The Almighty says in His Holy Book 'We sent you not, but as a mercy for all beings". (sura 21: 107) In actual life, however, such basic Godly directives realize 'man's' security and spiritual health. They also keep at bay sensations of failure, despair, and the heavy feeling of guilt which shun the overtures for mercy. God says in the Qur'an, the Holy Book of Islam: "Say" O My servants who have transgressed against your souls! Despair not of the mercy of God, for God forgives all sins, for He is All-forgiving, ALl-Merciful." (sura 39: 53). This is indeed a great estimation of the value of 'man' and the position he holds vis-a-vis his Creator.

The Prophet Muhammed once saw, while sitting with friends, a woman passing by holding her child to her bosom with great love and tenderness, a sight that prompted the Prophet into saying:

– "Do you think this woman can throw this child of hers into the fire?"

– "No! O Messenger of God". Answered the prophet's companions.

– "God is kinder to his faithful worshippers than this woman to her child" said the Prophet. One can see from the above with what great kindness has God surrounded 'man'. This also reveals Islam's

theory on erring and misbehaviour generally, and God's appreciation of man's weakness. The Qur'an says that God is more knowledgeable of man than man is of himself.

In guiding 'man' to righteousness and keeping him from the pitfalls of heresy and evil, Isalm adopts the kindest and most tender of tones. Addressing Himself to His Messenger Muhammad, the Almighty says: "And argue with them in ways that are best and most gracious". (sura 16: 125) And then again He Says: "Now has come to you a Messenger from amongst yourselves, it grieves him that you should suffer: Ardently anxious is he over you: To the believers is he most kind and merciful." (sura 9: 128).

And once more He says: "It is part of the mercy of God that you do deal gently with them. wert you severe or harsh-hearted, they would have broken away from about you. So pass over (their faults) and ask for (God's) forgiveness for them". (sura 3: 159).

Having said all this, He stresses yet once more "man's" freedom in seeking his own benefit. Thus the Qur'an says "says: O mankiad, Now truth has reached you from your Lord, those who are guided are guided only for their own souls, those who stray, they do so far their own loss and I am not (set) over you to arrange your affairs".

The summary of "man" in Islam is shown in the following:

- God preferred him to all His other creatures when he blew of his spirit to him

- He made Angels Kneel to him.

- He provided him with Knowledge and brains.

- He allowed him a will of his own.

- He created the earth and what it carried for his enjoyment and livelihood.

- He appreciated what weakness there was in him.

- He opened the doors of penance for him, to forgive his errors.

- He sent him His Messengers to guide him if he deviated from the right path or got lost.

- He got heaven ready for him in the hereafter if he took the faith and behaved righteously.

# # #

Chapter 3

Equality

It is largely true to say that at the time of the advent of Islam, humanity as a whole was suffering from disunity and dissension both on the general and local levels of countries and peoples everyuhere. Disunity among men stemmed mainly from the supremacy of the theory of strength and supremacy and the tyrannical control of the strong over weak; control which in some instances came to slavery and bondage. Diverse wars and conflicts led to the formation of a class of serfs made up mostly of war prisoners, and as a result of plundering and looting operations that often went beyond money and valuables to include man himself. There were also class barriers caused by certain privilages, established in the course of history, for the clergy, ruling men, and others. Such privilages eventually became rights that were inherited by sons from fathers and grandfathers, and in ancient countries like Greece and Rome, the number of slaves was double or treble that of free men.

The Western World did not get to know about the principle of equality except when alerted to it through the voice of the philosophers of the French Revolution in the seventeenth century. From France the idea of equality was transmitted to various European countries with different time lapses the last of which was what occurred in the Bolshevik Revolution which hoisted different slogans to realize equality among all individulas in the society. A bloody struggle ensued in which the Revolution did away with several of the privilaged classes. Only several years later, members of the Bolshevist party came to represent a new class that occupied an advanced position among the populace on both the social and economic levels; and slogans advocating equlity were forgotten.

It, naturally enough, was not always possible for US citizens and citizens of Western Europe to know the role of Islam in settling the principle of equality, and having it practised as a fundamental value and prerequisite of Islamic life which emanates from the Moslem faith itself. If opportunity availed itself to such hosts of Amercian and European citizens to know about Islam, they would realize that equality among people was aa value resolved by Islam nearly a thousand years before the French Revolution, and that it applied it in so practical a way that is indeed without a parallel in hisory.

Equality and the discipline governing the lives of Moslems do stand out conspicuously, because Islam does state that all men come from one origin, though they separated into nations, races, and colours, for they all were the offspring of one father and one mother. They were all subject to the one process of creation, and all passed through the same stages of evolution with no difference between one and another; and if they are all equal and agreeable at birth, they again end up in precisely the same way which is death.

God Almighty says: "O Mankind! We have created you from a single(pair) of a male and a female, and made you into nations and

tribes, that year may know each other, the nobled you is the beast in conduct' (Sura 49:13). And when this verse refers to the complete equality in origination, it actually defines one of the objectives of creation, and that is, getting acquainted with one another as indviduals and as nations, as well as cooperating with one another in the same way, on the grounds that they are all the sons of the same family.

Muhammad, the Messaenger of Islam, spoke lucidly of this value when he said, "There is no preference for a moslem over a non-Moslem, or a white over a black except through his fear of God, and his doing what is right. You are all of Adam, and Adam is of dust". Here is an emphasis on the oneness, the sameness of origin, a matter which in turn emphasizes individulas dependent on their fear of God and doing what is right, for fear of God and doing what is right, means doing what he ordains and refraining from committing what he prohibits: therefore there is no reason here of one being Preferred to another for his origin, stature, wealth, or strength, but preference is based on their righeousness, their obedience to God, and again to who exert more effort for their own good and the good of others.

This close relation between the value of equality and that of good deeds represents a divine appreciation for what equlaity implies, and for the lofty position it occupies in Islam. The Holy Qur'an tells of an attitude on the part of the Messager Muhammad when the latter neglected a poor blind man who had called and interrupted him but the Prophet devoted his attention to a wealthy dignitary from Mecca, whom he had hoped would respond to his call and embrace Islam. God reproached him for this attitude and instructed him on the explicit value of equality. God Almighty was not pleased with such an attitude in which His Messaenger favoured the wealthy man and neglected the poor one, so descends His Holy directive to his Messenger in which He says, "(The Propehet) Frowned and turned away, because there came to him the blink man interrupting, but what could tell you that perchance he might grow (in spiritual understanding)".

In the verse above, God reminds his messenger in a reproachful tone that the weakness and poverty of the blind man should not be a reason to neglect or reject him for he may be nearer to purity, righteousness, and piety than this wealthy man who had for long been closer to ingratitude and heathenism.

Equality was practised in all spheres in human activity, socially, in family life, and in society in general, in the days of the Prophet, and in the age of the Caliphs, following the death. The Prophet himself married off his cousin Zeinab Bint Jahsh who come frome a moble qurayshite family to Zeyd Ibn Harithah who was a mere slave, and Abdil-Rahman Ibn Awf, One of Islam's military leaders to Bilal Ibn Rabah's sister- Bilal was again a mere slave. 'Umar Ibnil-Khattab, the second of the Well-Guided Moslem Caliphs, offered his daughter in marriage to a former non-Arab slave, Salman al-Farisi by name.

This same practice, one notices, was followed in the choice of leaders whether of civilian, or military affairs; therefore the command of armed forces or the governorship of Moslem citites was not confined to the nobility or thir offspring, but was giving to capable and efficient Moslems, even though they might be slaves, so the Prophet made Zeid Ibn Haretha, a former slave, commander-in-Cheif of the Moselm army that fought the Byzantines, the Romans of the Eastern Roman Empire. Khalid Ibn El-Walid, the greatest of Moslem military leaders was a soldier in this army under Zeid's command and so were Abu Bakr Al-Siddiq and 'Umar Ibn Al-Khattab, the first and the second of the well-Guided Caliphs. The well-Guided Moslem Capliphs respectively.

A unique example of how deeply-rooted equality was in the Moslem society is a story told about 'Umar Ibn Al-Khattab who when lying on his death-bed, was asked to appoint his successor in ruling the Moslem world. The dying Caliph said in response: " If I was reached by one of two men, I would entrust this task to either one of

them, sure in the knowledge that either one would do it as it could best be done. The first of the two some is Salem, Abu Hudhayfat's slave, and the second is Abu 'Ubayda Ibn El-Jarrah".

The first was originally a Persian slave, who after embracing Islam earned through his efforts and efficiency, such a high and prestigious position in Islam that he was considered one of the best Moslems of the day, and the Prophet said of him: "God be praised that He has made the Moslem nation have men like him."

This does not mean of course that the Moslems merely took to treating slaves, or the lower classes of society, with particular kindness or care, but rather that equality had become a reality of such a permanent value that the efficient, regardless of race, colour, or status in life, was simply and naturally given the highest posts in the State.

Bilal Ibn Rabah once came to the Propher complaining that one of the Prophet's friends had called him "the son of a nigger" On hearing this, the Prophet grew angry and said to his friend: "No son of a white woman has an advantage over a son of a blck one except throught piery and good deeds, and went on to liken what his friend had done to the practices of Arab heathens before the advent of Islam; on which the Prophet's companion felt scathing regret and went apologizing to Bilal, putting his cheek to the ground and asking him to step on it with his foot so that he might repent.

God's Messenger Mhhammad indeed hated for his people to distinguish him in any gathering or while doing anything and used to say, "I hate to be distinguished over any of you".

One day a woman of Quraysh's nobility stole something, a number of people gathered together and asked Usama Ibn Zeied, who was one of the Prophet's closest companions, to intervene on her part and ask the Prophet to forgive her. Usama then went to the Prophet to talk to him about her, but the Prophet became angry and said to Usâmâ, "Are

you asking forgiveness for violation of one of God's lawa?" The Prophet then went to a gathering and stood out to address them saying: "Before you, if anyone of the nobility stole, your kin used to let him go, but if a plebe did that, they put him to the edge of the sword. By God, if my own daughter fatimah stole, I would cut off her hand."

The value of equality then was one of God's laws and Sunnah which Muhammad carried to all peoples, and he was indeed meticulous in its application, even to his nearest of kin and closest of associates.

God's Messenger Muhammad was so very keen on stressing th value of equality and irrevocably implanting it in the spirits of Moslems that he went out to his people when in his last illness that ended in his death to make of himself an example of the equlity which God so greatly estimates, and addressed his people in these words: "O my people, if I have whipped anybody's back, here is my back for him to whip, and I have taken anyone's money, let him take from mine, with not a worry that this might bring him trouble, for this is no affair of mine, and those who are dearest to me are the ones who take from me what is theris and help me meet my God with a spirit contented."

Obviously the Messenger of Islam would not have attached such importance to equlaity, had he not known that it embodied one of Islam's basic values, for a ruler, no matter how highly respectable or esteemed, has precisely the same righs and duties as anybody else and all people are equal before the law, so Islam had laid down, a thousand years back, the principle of equality between governor and governed, long before any of our modern constitution did.

Rulers in Islam were raised to their position among their people through their righteousness and piety and not for their riches or ancestry. It was therefore incumbent upon ruler to abide absolutely by equality among people in all matters of life.

Equality in Islam is a principle and a godly law which nobody had the right to violate or transgress as we had God's Messenger set the example, constantly before them. Abu Bakr Al-Siddiq the first of Caliphs that followed the Prophet, said in his first address to the Moslem world after becoming a Caliph: "O people, I have been made your Caliph and I am not the best among you, so if you find me right, give me succour, and if you find me wrong, rectify my path. Obey me as long as I obey God. If I disobey him, then I will not ask that you obey me."

In this situation, Abu Bakr emphasizes two princples:

First : that equlaity is the law living in a society - and apllying this first to himself.

Second : that the right of nationals of watching the ruler, is a right that emanates from the prinicple of equality which presupposes no grandeur or privileges to anyone. Abu Bakr then goes further to say they have the right to disobey him if he transgresses God's orders, or His Messenger's doctrine.

Equality eventually took such deep roots in Moslem spirits that it was indeed a unique and unmatched thing in the hisory of man. 'Umar Ibn Al-Khattab, the second Caliph, when first over as a Caliph, went out to his people and said the same thing that Abu Bakr had before him. "If you find me right, give me succour, and if you find me wrong, rectify my path," a thing that reassured Moslems since Umar had been known the days of the Prophet and in the Caliphate of Abu Bakr to be a man of great strength of character who would crush wrongoers unrelentingly. However a man who apparently had wanted to stress his right of observing the caliph's conduct, and did not see anything in the hard 'Umar to frighten him-now that equality was such a deeply rooted character trait-retorted by saying: "By God! if we saw any deviation in you, we would put it right by the edge of the sword".

Now what was 'Umar's answer to this uncalled for retort. He simply said" "Praise be to God that He had given the Moslem nation men who would put 'Umar right by the edges of their swords." This attitude on 'Umar's part, entailing as it did, encouragement to this man, reflected the sort of equality that prevailed in Islam between governor and governed. It was in fact almost legendry in its perfection. Moreover, the Caliph's revealed how inducive to doing right it was, and how prone those great Moslem rulers were to listening to criticism and accepting rectification.

This however was not just talk to excite feelings of admiration among the people but a genuine code of conduct and ethics on the part of both ruler and ruled.

Once 'Umar wrote a leaflet to be read to the people in mosques everywhere in which he said: "I have not sent my rulers to strike or insult you, or take your money unduly, but have resorted to them to teach you God's Holy Book, so those who suffer an injustice at the hands of a ruler do not have to knock on my door to tender such an injustice but should enter without permission so I could do them an immediate justice against these rulers."

Again it happened one day that a jew tendered a complaint against 'Ali Ibn Abi Tâlib, the Prophet's cousin and son-in-law, on which 'Umar called him into- his presence and sent for the Jew. On the Jew's arrival, 'Umar called to Ali, who was sitting beside him: "Abal Hassan," he said to him, "go sit next to your accuser." On hearing himself being called Abul-Hassan, anger began to appear on his face, so 'Umar said: "-Are you angry Abal-Hassan because I equalized you and your accuser by making you two sit side by side before me?" 'Ali replied: "No, -I am not angry because of that, I am angry because you have called my accuser by his name and called me Abal-Hassan (Hassan's father which adds dignity to me, thus -distinguishing me over him, a thing you had no right to do." Ali had considered 'Umar calling him Abal-Hassan a distinction bestowed on him by 'Umar, a

:hing that judges should not do.

This then was the way equality came to be viewed by Moslems as ı value of life, a value that Arabs did not only apply to themselves, ɔut applied to all Moselms, regardless of race or colour. 'Umar Ibn Al-Khattab for instance once ordered an Egyptian to whip the son of 'Amr Ibn El-'Ass, the Arab Ruler of Egupt, because the latter had whipped him when both, the former and the latter had run a race to-gether, and the Egyptian won the race, similar to this was the incident ɔf the Emir (the prince) who came at the the head of a hundred of his notables from across the border with Syria. -While circunambulating he Kaaba, a Beduin unintentionally stepped on the edge of his robe. The Emir slapped the Beduin hard causing him to bleed through the nose. The Beduin went to 'Umar complaining against the Emir, on which Umar summoned the Emir and ordered the Beduin to slap the Emir as he had slapped him. The Emir was affronted at the idea of a ayman slapping him and said to 'Umar: "Are you ordering a layman o slap me and I am a prince? and 'Umar replied: "Islam has made you equals. One is preferred to another only through piety and good deeds." These are but a few examples shedding light on the great val-ue of equality as Islam ordained it.

# # #

Chapter 4

Fraternity

Numerous thinkers consider Divine religions to be extensive revolutions aiming at effecting changes in the lives of men and societies, and in their addressing themselves to the human mind and to the feelings of man, revolutions do in fact try to ensure the best relationships amongst men's societies at all times and in all places.

Islam had advocated and upheld all this, adding however the general rights of man. Social revolutions which preceded the advent of Divine religions did not pay attention to the rights of man that we now acknowledge and respect, nor did the democratic system that today's world acknowledge and respect, nor did the democratic system that rose in ancient Greece resolve the principles that today's world acknowledges in this connection, namely, equal opportunities for all citizens regardless or race, colour, or birth nor again did it uphold equality amongst the sons of the same nation, for there were classes with acknowledged and inheritable privileges, and there were classes of slaves and land serfs that were denied even basic human rights.

Then Islam came with a set of values that indeed constituted one of the most potent factors for its vast and quick spreading, and was in fact a most powerful incentive inducing nations and men, eastwards and westwards, to embrace Islam. Those values however were not just mottoes or principles that stood separate from or independent of Moslem's life or conduct, but were part of that life and the bases of men's conduct, behaviour, thought, and work. Awareness of these values and their meticulous application was one of the main reasons why Islam found its way to the hearts and minds of men, and why again Islamic society became the lighthouse that beamed such ethical and human values which man so readily embraced, and which soon becamme the essence of his civilization and its main characteristics that have lived with it to this very day.

We have talked of the value of "man" ad that of "equality" as expounded in Islam by the Holy Qur'an, how it becamw one of the basic characteristics of Islamic life, and how the Prophet Muhammed, and the Caliphs after him, held all men equal regardless of race, colour, ancestry, or position in life.

Next to the value of equlity comes that of fraternity. The Holy Qur'an states that the faithful are all brothers. Islam goes to the farthest end in stressing this value and extending its scope both in theory and in practice. It allows no limitations or obstacles to stand in the way of this great human value, and does not condone race, language, or colour as resons for man's estrangement from his fellow-man. The Holy Qur'an has stressed that when It said, "The faithful are but brethern", (sura 49: 10), and Muhammed, God's Messenger said, "You are all from Adam..". He also said: "No preference is given to an Arab over a non-Arab except through piety, which in Islam means fear of God and doing His bidding.

The value of fraternity in Islam is not in just being a theoretical principle, or a slogan raised with no consideration to its application in the diverse social relationships, for Islam considered it a basic prin-

ciple, and a belief closely-tied to man's belief in God and religion. God's Messenger Muhammad said: "One's faith is not complete till he wishes his brother what he wishes for himself." The loftiest manifestation of this love of man for his fellow-men is his putting other human-beings before himself. Islam says that the Moslem who does not have such an ethical value deeply-rooted in him, is viewed by the Islamic religion as weak of faith and lacking in Islamic devotion, and so is he considered of hatred for his fellow human beings rises in his heart or mind. The man who loves his brother in humanity and wishes him all that he wishes for himself is a man whose religion and faith are completed.

There is hardly any ethical doctrine or any social one that reached in its estimation of the brotherhood of men the extent that Islam has, and what God's Messenger Muhammed, and the Caliphs after him practised in this connection. The prophet, in spite of the way he was exalted and extolled for his Divine Mission, would not assume the air of authority, kingship, or even leadership when He became in fact the supreme authority in the whole Arabian Paninsula. when he came to a meeting, he would sit where the last man sat, as if he were just another man among them, and would refuse to advance to any place of prominence, and would answer anyone who addressed him whether a free man or a slave, a rich man or a poor one, and if he heard a man was sick, he would go to visit him whether he was a lowly poor man, or a notable known for his riches.

The Messenger of Islam Muhammad applied this value of fraternity in indeed a broad and general way in the new Moslem society when he and his followers, whom the heathens of Mecca had so harassed, deprived of freedom to adopt the new faith, tortured, and boycotted socially and economically, emigrated to yathrib (Al-Madina). On arriving at AL-Madina, the Prophet called on his followers to tae brothers from among the faithful, whether from amongst themselves, the new immigrants, or the townspeople of Al Madina who had

flocked into the new faith. So, an immigrant, be he a slave or a master, took a brother and shared his home and wealth with him. Some even divorced some of their wives so that they might become wives to their new brothers. Such brotherliness, unmatched even in revolutions and religious calls, was one of the strongest bonds that cemented the unity of this new Moslem society.

Brotherliness between the faithful became the strong substitute of blood relationships and tribal belonging which Arabs had previously held so tenaciously to. The Prophet made of this new brotherliness a relationship stronger than that of blood or tribal relationships, and was in fact the beginning of a society that built its present and futeure on purely ethical, truthful, and benevolent bases. This brotherliness soared so high that it became inheritable after death; a brother-in-faith thus inherited his faithful brother's wealth when the latter died. Heathens whon were blood relatives to a faithful dead man would not contest the right of his brother-in-faith to inherit him after his death. This kept on being practised till heathenism was done away with and Islam was embraced by one and all. Then the principles of heritage went back to what they had been, and Islam reinstated the rights of offspring to what their fathers and brothers had left.

This human brotherliness, considered by Islam to be one of its top values, does not at all mean that anyone should be denied the fruit of his labour, or deprived of the rights accruing to him as a result of his aptitude or excellence in his work, for Islam opens the door widely to all aptitude or excellence in his work, for Islam opens the door widely to all aptitudes, creativeness, and talent mental or physical, to get due reward. The Holy Qur'an says:

"To all are degrees (or ranks)
According to their deeds;
For your Lord
Is not unmindful
Of anything that they do." (sura 6: 132)

Umar Ibnil-Khattab, the second of the well-Ginded Caliphs, said: 'He who slackens in doing his work does so at the expense of his an-:estry and their good name."

G.H. Wells devotes a whole chapter of his book "An Outline of Iistory" to these values of Islam which were considered the greatest riumph in the history of humanism. He points out that one reason vhy Islam spread so widely and so quickly was the fact that Islam per-isted in considering all the faithful-regardless of race or colour-equal brothers in the sight of god, with precisely the same standing.

This brotherliness that Islam so emphatically stipulated and ap-plied, completely did away with the age-old rivalries and conflicts of he pre-Islamic era which had carried- because of the sway of ven-geance the causes of the perpetual bloody disputes that dominated the Arabian peninsula before Islam,.

This brotherliness again led to the prevalence of a sense of security mong the weak, the strangers, and others of the lower classes who iad come to have genuine brotherly feelings towards the rich and the iotables. The Holy Qur'an describes what fraternity had entered the pirits of the faithful in the Almighty's saying:

"And (moreover) He has put
Affection between their hearts;
Not if you had spent
All that is in the earth,
you could not have produced
That affection, but God
Has done it: for He
Is Exalted in Migt, Wise." (sura 8: 63)

# # #

Chapter 5

Liberty And Liberation

We are all agreed that the freedom of the individual in its contemporary sense was not known in the old world. The old world was on the whole subjected to ways of governing and government that used force and suppression to subjugate men and nations to their influence and interest. The individual's freedom comprises his rights to self expression, to a faith of his choice, to observe and maintain the rites of that faith, and last but not least, to gain the fruit of his labour. The induividual also has the right of possession as this is a part of his right to work and gain the fruit of his labour.

Freedom, as resolved by Islam includes all such rights, for Islam gurarantees man's rights of expression, faith, thought, conduct, and ownership on condition that he does not transgress on the freedom of others, which is the modern interpretation of the rights of man. Freedom, as all nations are now agreed, is confined only to a social frame that prohibits from tresspassing on the rights of others for any

reason whatsoever, as such a transgression is in fact a tresspassing on the freedom of others and an infringement of that freedom.

In the book of Islam, the Holy Qur'an, we find a great many Holy verses that embody and assert all different aspects of the freedom of man; his right of thought, of expression, of conduct, and work in precisely the same way that we now interpret them. For instance regarding the freedom of faith, the Holy Qur'an says:

"Let there be no compulsion

In Religion: Truth stands out

Clear from Error:" (sura 2: 256)

In all its different epochs, the history of Islam testifies that Islam never coerced any of the nations that were conquered to convert to the Moslem faith, and that it was the absolute right of everybody to stick to whichever faith he chose, regardless of what that faith was. Moreever, the Moslem State granted that right and guranteed to safeguard it. When Islam granted that right; It made contemplating the universe, its creation, and the discipline governing it a means to guide the people through their own mental faculties to God Almighty Who had created all this universe and laid the discipline necessary to preserve it

It then declares that those who seek God's forgiveness and make amends do so for themeselves, and those who stray, stray against themselves.

Considering the obove, Islam, one finds, unequivocally stipulates that freedom of faith is an unarguable question. As for God's Messenger Muhammad whom God had sent to call people to His worship, the Qur'an stipulates that his message veered not towards coercion or pressure for the sake of religion, but consisted in enlightening people, urging them to contemplate life, the Creator, and then choose whatever their minds were inclined to in the matter of

faith. The Almighty, addressing himself to His Messenger Muhamad says:

"A light, wherewith We

Guide such of Our servants

As We will; and verily

You do guide (men)

To the Straight Way: (sura 42" 52)

And then He says again ascertaining this ides,

"Therefore do you give

Admonition, for you arte

One to admonish.

You are not one

To manage (men;s) affairs." (sura 8: 21-22)

and again says to His Messenger,

"And argue with them

In ways that are best

And most gracious." (sura 16: 125)

and says to Him again,

Were you severe

Or harsh-hearted,

They would have broken away

From about you." (sura 3: 159)

From the above, it becomes obvious to what extent Islam had gone to ascertain the individual's freedom of faith, an attitude when meas-

ured with the criteria of the age in which Islam appeared, was indeed the peak of magnanimity. It also represented a civilizational value that humanity had not known before.

Next to the freedom of fiath is the freedom of thought and expression. Islam considered contrivance to deduce a sound opinion, one of the sources of deduction governing the doctrines related to faith, and if the freedom of thought and contrivancewas guaranteed in matters related to religion, it was only logical that it would also be guaranteed in matters beneath that level.

God's Messenger Muhammed once met a Moslem whom He had earlier sent to teach people matters pertaining to Islam, and to act as a judge among them, relying on its rulings. The Prophet asked the man, "How do you judge?" The man answered, "By God's Book". The Prophet asked again, "What if you didn't find the answer there?" "I would resort to His Messenger's Sunna? "The man said. The Phrophet asked once more: "And what if you didn't find the answer there either?". And the man said, "I would contrive to give my own opinion". The Prophet then said, recommending this tendency on the man's part, "Praise be to God that He has made you see what I wanted.

Thus Moslems came to recognize that to contrive to find the right opinion and to express it, was something that Islam called for and approved of. Because of this, we find that the Moslems were among the first to transmit Greek sciences and philisophies to their own language, to expound and comment on them, expressing all along their own opinion; and this was a prohibited matter in certain eras. Then the Rensaissance strated in Europe, depending mainly on Moslem translations of the those Greek sciences and philisophies, and the Arabs' explanations and interpretations of them.

Freedom of thought and opinion was not at the time Islam appeared anything that crossed anybody's mind; it was not in fact resolved and acknowledged till after the French Revolution. However, a

century after the advent of Islam, there emerged into existence a revival of learning led by Moslem scientists and thinkers in all branches of science and knowledge, with equal attention given to both sciences of religion and those of this world, and their books came out in abundance on chemistry, astronomy, physics, logic, and ethics, as well as on matters relating to Religion such as interpretations of the Qur'an, the Prophet's Sayings, theology and other branches.

Beginning with the second century after the Prophet's immigration to 'Yathrib (Al Madina), freedom of opinion was so entrenched in the spirit of man that it led to the appearance of different religious doctrines, based on the opinions of scientists, their evidences, inferences, and deductions. Such scientists soon had their followings in the various Moslem countries and their desciples who upheld their doctrines and followed in their footsteps, and though this naturally results in the formation of different groupings and sects, yet each of these respected the other; thus Islam, having allowed freedom of thought and differences of opionion in matters ralating to Religion, had inclusively done likewise in other lesser and mundane matters. Undoubtedly, this freedom of thought and opinion was one of the paramount Factors ascertaining the dignity of man, and inducing him to think, work, and cooperate with others for the welfare and progress of the human society at large.

We have witnessed many a bitter experience as a result of suppressing the freedom of thought, or confining it to limited few and prohibiting it for the majority of people, a situation that often led to wars. The Second World War was a result of the suppression of just this freedom when Fascisn and Nazism denied it to their peoples, and led them to this devastating war, which obviously did not come about as a result of their own free will or free thinking. On account of that the freedom of thought was one of the foremost and most important

principles that the Atlantic Charter has stipulated for all the peoples of the world, considering it the cardinal pillar on which the life of man and international peace rest.

Freedom of thought, as expounded and stressed by Islam, was one of the more important causes of the unity of its peoples, their closeness together, and their coopration in scientific fields and the spheres of various arts. Seminars were held in all the bigger cities in mosques and institutes, chaired by scientists and were always open to everyone to attend and participate in freely. But whilst Islam provided so adequately for the freedom of expression, it nevertheless pointed out means that were most inducive to its realization. The ALmighty says:

"Say to My Servants
That they Should (only) say
Those things that are best". (sura 17: 53)
and saya again, "O You who believe!
Fear God, and your Utterance shall always
Be directed to the Right:" (sura 33: 70)
"And dispute you not
With the people of the Scripture
Except with means better
(Than mere disputation)," (sura 29: 46)
"Repel evil with that
Which is best". (sura 41: 34).

Thus does Islam recommend sound statement and good consel. It states: "Kind words
And the convering of faults
Are better than charity
Followed by injury" (sura 2: 263)

It furthermore orders that nonsensical talk be shunned, and describes the faithful as being the least-unclined to empty talk.

Islam had called for the freedom of thought as thought is but a part of the nature that God had created in man. Islam had however laid down a rule for it which is indeed the summit of rationalization, for the Prophet had said in this connection. "Provided that it causes no harm or brings harm to others." In fact what is said about the "Do's and Don'ts" is but a reassertion of this, for Islam prohibits nothing save what is harmful to man, detrimental to his health, expending of his soul and wealth and shameful for his family and society.

Islam had-for the sake of its own call-directed man towards contemplation, meditation and free thinking. It also directed that man should not follow other's wrongful and deviant opinions. The Holy Qur'an says:

"When it is said to them:

"Follow what God has revealed:"

They say: "Nay! we shall follow

The ways of our fathers."

What! even though their fathers

Were void of wisdom and guidance?" (sura 2: 170)

As a mater of fact, the Holy Qur'an contains many verses that urge man to look at the universe, contemplate the diverse phenomena and creatures, on the assumption that such a penetrating look will lead him to the truth, and take him by the hand, to God, the Creator of all things.

We have seen how this directive had again led to the deductive method in science, which had been found by the Arab scientists in a science like astronomy, and their precedence in uncovering cosmic theories like the rotation of the earth and the sun, and the relation of

both to other planets, and all the advancement they realized in medicine and chemistry.

In this time and age, we all realize that the various freedoms, those of faith and thought, of opinion and expression, represent the loftiest of man's achievements, and that they are in fact the basis of the dignity of man and of any self-respecting human life; and that in the end they are the irreplaceables for any society desirous of progress.

All such freedoms were brought to the world by Islam, and were advocated by Islam as early as the seventh century A.D. and were-as expounded before-among the reasons that brought about such marked advance in science, art, and literature which was the basis of Islamic culture up till the Age of the Renaissance.

While Moslems, the world over, acknowledge all that, they also recognize that the spirit of Islam calls for and asserts the freedom of man, particularly the mental freedom that is so closely-bound to the freedom of thought and freedom of opinion, for all Mislems are well-aware of the fact that the progress of humanity, the function of civilization, and the sovereignty of the spirit of man are tied up with what is realized for the individual of the sacred rights of voicing his own opinions and expressing his views, for such rights were indeed the pillars of Islam, the faith of our forefathers, the Religion we believe in and firmly uphold with our minds and souls.

Annexed to these basic freedoms is what is now called the social freedom, which is in fact the freedom from want and deprivation as these two constitute economic pressures that can in turn affect man's freedom of thought and opinion, and rob him of his dignity and place him under pressures that can completely paralyze his will. There have arisen, along the course of history, certain human groupings that under the pretext of the basic needs of man and his freedom from want and deprivation exploited their peoples and led them to totalitarian systems of government and endeed such exploitation by robbing those

peoples of those very freedoms, namely those of thought, opinion, and expression.

We now turn to Islam's stance towards this vital question of fighting want and deprivation of the basis of the ecomomic aspect of the life of the individual and of the group.

Right from the start we should state that Islam had asserted man's right to life, and considered unjustly violating such right by killing or otherwise, the greatest of crimes, the same as heresy, and the Holy qur'an threatened those who slew people unjustly with the severest of punishments.

Likwise, Islam does not deny man the right of enjoying all that life offers of ornament and pleasure that his efforts and work have earned him. Islam asserts these rights as much as it asserts basic rights as those of justice, of equality and of freedom. The Holy Qur'an says:

"And when the Prayer

Is finished, then may you

DIsperse through the land,

And seek of the Bounty

of God". (sura 62:10)

And then the Almighty says again:

"A Sign for them

Is the earth that is dead:

We do give it life,

And Produce grain therefrom,

Of which they do eat.

And We produce therein

Orchards with date-plams
And vines, and We cause
Springs to gush forth therein:
That they may enjoy
The fruits of this (artistry):
It was not their hands
That made this:
Will they not then give thanks?" (sura 36: 33-35)

The Almighty also says:

"O You who believe!
Give of the good things
Which you have (honourably) earned.: (sura 2: 267)

And saya:

"O you who believe!
Make not unlawful
The good things which God
has made lawful for you: (sura 5: 87)

Here we see God's call for work, and for well-earned profit, and again fore the non-denial to ourselves of those blessed fruits of work which God has permitted us. He has also ordered that we adorn when going to the mosque. And if Islam has called for work and profit-making; it has also called for enjoying the wholesome fruit of such profit, and for people not to deny themselves the good fruit of their labour. Islam has, however, denied man certain things like alcoholic drinks and gambling, and it has been scientifically proven that what Islam has denied man, is harmful to him ad detrimental to his health and to his socal and human relations.

The next feerdom stipulated by Islam is the freedom from want which is also one of the basic principles stipulated by the Atlantic Charter, following the Second World War. The point to be stressed here is that Islam did that fourteen centuries before the Atlantic Charter. Howeer, the point about freedom from want in Islam is taken up in the next chapter which is entitled "Social Justice", someting that Islam provided for through Zakat (Almsgiving). that Islam made it an obligation on every Moslem. Zakat is a certain percentage of every Moslem's wealth which he pays annually, Farm produce is paid at harvest time. Nobody is exempted, as long as he possesses the minimum amount out of which Zakat should be paid, for this percentage is no bargain to anyone. The entire sum of it is allotted to those mentioned in the verse 60 of the sura of Repentance, in addition to what the State earmarks for development and the like and stability in their lawful life-pursuits. The Holy Qur'an says:

"In the law of Equality, retaliation is prescribed for you,

In it there is (saving of) Life

To you, O you men of understading;

That you may

Restrain youselves." (sura 2: 179)

This means that this punishment, i.e. capital punishment offers life to both the individual and society.

In this connection, Islam does not differentiate between a slain man and another, but punishment must be inflicted on the assassin whether the assassinated is a slave or a free man, a male or a female, a Moslem child or a non-Moslem. This is what the Holy Qur'an meant when it said:

"We ordained therein for them:

Life for life, eye for eye,"

So Islam values human life unreservedly, regardless of the race of the assassinated, his age, station in life or religion, and though Islam relieves man of the responsibility in case of an unintentional error or forgetfulness, it does not do so in the case of an unintentional assassination though it tends to lessen the severity of the punishment by giving it in the form of a suitable compensation to the dead man's kin. There is however a kind of crime in which the culpable party remains unknown; here Islam lays the responsiblitity on the society where it has taken place and decrees that the individuals of the said society should collectively pay the compensation due to the dead man's kin. This was a novel principle that was not known before or after Islam. The indemnity was resolved after the Governor summoned fifty men from the said society and they all swore that they hadn't killed the man and didn't know who was reponsible.

We pass on after that to what Islam decreed regarding freeing man from fear for his money which he had earned through work or had come to him througgh inheritance. Islam as pointed out before, respects the individual's ownership and his right to inheritance. It also acknowledges the freedom of the owner to dispense with what he owns in whatever way he pleases whether the matter owned is stationary or transitory. In decreeing this right, it does so for all men, Moslems and non-Moslems alike. In addition to that Islam forbids all sorts of encroachment on the wealth of the others and lays down suitable deterrents to handle encroachers on people's wealth. The Holy Qur'an orders that a thief's arm be cut off. This severe punishment however, wasn't applied in the life of the Prophet except when certain conditions related to the value of what was robbed, the kind of theft it was, the place where it occurred and the attitude of the thief and his relationship to both the owner and the withnesses; unless all such conditions were made available, a case termed "doubtful" then arose and the punishment of cutting of the thief's hand was not applied. If the thief claimed that the stolen wealth was his, or that he was a relative

of the money-owner, or that the owner had begrudged him a fair wage, or that the motive behind the theft was simply sheer hunger, another judgement dictated by circumstancial evidence was then passed.

Islam asserts with equal emphasis the right of the worker to his wage. Ensuring this right was considered one of the bases of security, peace of mind and freedom from fear. Islam called for respect and fulfillment of wages that have ben earned, and warns employers that the delay or refusal of payment of such wages will mean an ill-fated future. In this connection the Prophet says: "The Day of Judgement is the enemy of the man who hires a worker who works for him but doesn't give him the wages he has earned". He aslo says: "Give the hireling his due before his sweat dries up."

There remains man's freedom from fear for his honour or the chastity of his woman. Here Islam appears to take the greatest care of anything that may cause dishonour to a man and the heaviest and most deterring punishments are inflicted for rape, adultery, profanity, hypocrisy and other misdeeds like betrayal, double-dealing and such wrong-doing as may bring dishonour to a man or desecrate his good name.

Political Freedom:

In our modern times political freedom signifies the participation of citizen in choosing the system of government they want through electing candidates who they think are fit to be in the government by way of a plebiscite or an election. It also includes the citizens right to follow up, observe, criticize and voice one's opinion on the way rulers are conducting their business of governing.

All such principles were embraced by Islam and practised by Moslems after the death of the Prophet. The Caliphs were all unanimously named Caliphs by their people. This resembled the present day plebiscite. As for criticising and guiding their rulers, the first well-Guided Caliphe, and they were the nearest to Prophet Muhammed's days, set the greatest examples for people to follow. Abu Bakr Al-

Siddiq, the first Caliph said in his address to his people when he was first chosen: "If you find me right, give me succour, and if you find me worng, put me on the right path." He went even further when he pledged he would not be asking people for obedience unless he obeyed God and His Messenger himself. 'Umar, the second Caliph said the same thing and so did 'Usman, the third Caliph.

One more practice is still undiscussed, and that is slavery and Islam's attitude towards it. When Islam came, slavery was being practised as a civil right and a basic principle of the economic life which in those days depended entirely on agriculture and tilling the land. In ancient Greece's golden age, Aristotle claimed that certain people were born to be slaves, and in Plato's Republic, we find that Plato denied slaves the right of citizenship and deemed it necessary to force them to be serfs of the land and chattels in their owners'homes. In fact when Islam came, slaves were greater in number than the free men of the world, but Islam came with an altogether different attitude and confronted this inhuman problem with measures foremost of which were:

- Prohibiting slavery and implanting hatred of it in the hearts of men.

- Endorsed efforts to free slaves in the world as a whole. One way it did that was through alloting a part of Zakat (a percentage of people's wealt paid by all Moslems for reasons of Almsgiving). It also made freeing slaves penance for man's misdeeds.

# # #

Chapter 6

Social and Economic Justice

It has become obnious through man's experience throughout history that the non-existence of adequate measures for securing justice in economic means, in the society of men, and for realising the necessary balance between individual and society objectives, can in the long-run destroy all man's values and humane principles such as equality, liberty, fraternity and all other values that Divine messages and ethics have called for.

We have also seen how totalitraian regimes have sacrificed the freedom of the individual and his creative initiative under the pretext that by so doing, they were gураranteeing prosperous living for society as a whole and seeking justice in the distribution of wealth. Under this slogan faith and the freedom of the individual in all its shapes and forms have been sacrificed, and so have the freedom of thought, expression and criticism.

When Islam came fourteen centuries ago and sanctioned those human values which we are enumerating in this book, it was necessary

for it as a Divine integrated Religion to tackle society's economic life, drawing the lines that would bring about a sound life for the community that is void of any destructive struggles and preserve human values foremost among which is faith in God, in your fellow-human-being, and in his freedom which is in truth the guarantee of security and the development and progress of human life.

Islam which had given the spiritual side of man's life all the attention that it deserved, devoting to it the greatest care as it called for freedom and justice, eithcs and brotherliness, and made faith in God and retribution on the Day of Judgement the solid foundation on which man's conscience rested for his own good and the good of society at large, did not disregard the economic side and its effect on man's life, but put it in the size beyond which it should not go. The laying down of principles for economic cooperation between men in a society, to realize an abundance in production, and justice in distribution without prejudice to the individual's initiatives, or his rights or his childern's to what profits they make, and that in order that the ability to create and innovate might not be destroyed in man. From that cooperation based as it was on faith, sprang so to speak, the unity of all Moslems inspite of their differences in race and colour. Indeed, Von Kremer stipulates in his study of Moslem culture, "that Islam becam a bond between antagonistic diversified elements that had lived in the conquered territories which extended from the coast of the Atlantic Ocean to the frontiers of China. To those peoples Islam became a social and economic order as well as being a faith and religious creed".

Weil Bouant acknowledges in his encyclopedia on Human Civilization that we don't find in the whole history of man anything as exemplary as what Islam had imposed on the incomes of the rich to help the poor.

Islam made a duty and an obligation that society should guarantee for the individual a means for his living, and that this guarantee begins

the day he is born and continues till the day he dies.

Massignon says that Islam had enough sufficiency to make it stand firmly in achieving and maintaining justice through its imposition of Zakat (a Percentage of income paid by every individual to help the poor and the needy etc..). We have previously mentioned when talking of freedom from fear including fear of loss of one's wealth, that Islam had laid down the following principles regarding pecuniary matters:

- The right of the individual to Private ownership by way of legitimate earning with no reservation.

- The right of the individual to have his offspring and relations inhert his wealth and property according to certain rulings that are absolutely just.

- The right of the individual to enjoy his wealth in food consumption, clothing and ornament, while shunning rxtravagance and abiding by what is good and right, and keeping away from bad and evil doings that bring harm to both his physical and spiritual health.

Islam laid down economic duties for the benefit of society, and to provide a free and decent life for all individuals. The first of the duties imposed by Islam in this connection is that of Zakat which is a duty that without which the Moslem faith is invalid. It is therefore a duty that has to be conformed with and carried out of one's own funds. Theologists said that Zakat was a condition of the validity of the Moslem faith. Zakat, as expounded by Islam is the right of the poor and the needy to the stated pecuniary percentage mentioned earlier.

The goals of Zakat are detailed in a saying by the Prophet of "Islam and his counsel to one of his rulers whose name was Muadh Ibn Jabal whom he commissioned to Yemen. He said to him:

"Call them to avow that there is but the one God. If they obey you tell them that God has imposed prayers five Times a day. if they obey you, tell them that God imposes on them alms to be taken from the

rich and given back to the poor. If they do what you say, then you are never to touch their wholesome funds, and fear the pleas of the wornged, for God always accepts them".

There stand out several principles in this saying:

1- That Zakat which is money taken from the rich and handed back to the poor- comes directly next to the obligation of prayer.

2- That if people do respond to the call of God in paying the Zakat their wealth is not to be touched afterwards.

3- He warns his ruler against wrongfulness saying that the pleas of the wronged are responded to by God and that no veil hides them from His sight.

zakat, brought in by Islam for expenditure on the poor and the needy.. etc... of the society is obligatory on every Moslem, has at least the minimum amount of money to warrant Zakat. Its percentages are as follows:

- In agriccultural products such as corn, maize, rice, barley, dates and raisins, Zakat is one tenth of what is produced if the land is irrigated by rain water and one over twenty if it is irrigated by human effort or mechanical means. The minimum amount warranting Zakat is 4 $^1/_6$ ardebs.

- As for Zakat on money, gold, silver and banknotes and the like, 2 $^1/_2$ per cent is to be provided after a year passes from the date of its possession.

- In trade the Zakat which is to be paid is again 2 $^1/_2$ per cent.

- Animal wealth constituted an important part of an Arab's wealth. It includes sheep, camels and beasts of butden. The minimum number if camels wealth warrnting Zakat is five camels, for which one sheep is paid. For every thirty cows, a calf more than a year old is paid, and for every forty sheep, a sheep or goat.

One notices that Zakat is imposed on all possessions, moneys and otherwise. It is general and obligatory on all nationals who possess as from the stated minimum which is called the nisâb.

Another Zakat is due on the approach of feast directly after Ramadan. so that Moslems may receive the feast with them having money that enables them to face the feast's requirements. This Zakat is called Zakâtul-Fitr which is paid for the number of persons making up the family. Two days before the feast of Ramadan, the head of a family gives away a "Sa'a" of corn, dated or what money this is worth.

Such a measure equals four mudds, each mudd is a handful of the two hands together.

These are the sources of Zakat. All are inclusive and diversified. Moslems carry it out as a religious ritual and a basic part of their Religion for which he accounts on the Day of Judgement and is made to carry it out in this world by force if he or she refuses to comply. It is to be noted in this connection that after Muhammad's death, a host of Arabs refused to carry on with it in the beginning The Caliph Abu Bakr fought them and made them go back to observing it.

As to ways of utilizing the Zakat, the Holy Qur'an defines them: It is for the poor and the needy and those are entrusted with collecting and distributing it, and those whose hearts are recently reconciled and those in slavery and those in debt; and in the way of Allah, and for the wayfarer That is a duty enjoined by Allah the All-Knowing. All-Wise." (sura 9: 60)

Zakat system, set out by Islam to face poverty and needfulness met with the admiration of many scholars of Islam, and came to be viewed as an exemplary replacement for those regimes that raise slogans supposedly for the defence of the poor classes but in truth impose on these classes totalitarian rule that resort to suppression and do away with all freedoms.

A German theologist (Marx Weilhelm) says of Zakat: "This tax is a religious obligation that everybody had to honour and carryout in addition to its being a religious ritual, for Zakat is again considered a general social order and a source through which the Moslem State saves what it supplies and aids the poor with in a disciplined, permanent and just system in which there is no oppression or suppression. Islam is the very first Religion to put into effect this splendid system in the whole of man's history and this system did help in doing away with contradictions between groupings in the one state; this in turn united the Islamic nation in a big just and social circle."

Zakat that is collected in one town is expended on the inhabitants of that town. With this human spirit that men did not know before, people loved Islam, so it spread in this rapid way that history recorded and which so surprised chronologists and historians.

Islam also allotted one fifth of the booty that Moslems won in fighting to numerous groups of the helpless and the needy and left it to the Prophet to spend it in the name of God on such needy people. It also allocated any money that they came by unexpectedly and which they exerted no effort to get, to the propagetion of the word of God as well as to the orphans, the needy and travellers whose money and provisions were exhausted while in travel.

Time and again, the Holy Qur'an reminds Moslems that what they pay to meet the needs of the poor is something that the Almighty repays them manifold, as alms earns the benefactor ten times what it is worth, and that what men give away is in fact their thanks to God for his bounty.,

We can sum up the economic system that Islam brought into the world in the seventh century A.D., that is centuries before the advent of any other economic system the world has known, in the following:

- That it aims at securing the greatest economic justice possible, considering that such an aim is one of the foremost bases of caring and cooperation that equality and human brotherliness necessitate.

- That the rulings that were devised were in no way traditional or parallel to what was prevailing in the world at the time Islam came, for the common practice in those days was for the ruling authoeity to impose taxes on people without any real service being rendered to the taxpayer in return. Islam came and drastically changed the situation. To begin with, it exempted the poor whose possessions did not exceed the level of exemption from all kinds of taxation. and then it decreed that all taxes were to be utilized to the poor and the needy. This was the very first act of its kind in the entire history of man.

- In pre-Islamic days, wealth was one of most important means that led to power and governorship, A tribe chieftain or a feudal lord was simply the richest among his tribesmen or his feudality.

When Islam am, it severed all relations between politics and riches. Then history witnessed a class of rulers who were nearer to poverty than riches and they were set salaries enough for their own expenses and those of their childrem.

- Before Islam, taxes were collected by force and oppression by the ruling authorities solely for their benefit and to make them stronger. Islam, when it cam, made the collection of this money a means to gain God's blessing and a way to get penance. Such moneys were also directed for the benefit of the poor and the needy of the society.

As for the principles on which was established the economic order of Islam to realise justice, these can be summed up in the following.

- Islam sanctioned individual ownership of the wealth which is the fruit of man's honest labour. Islam's recognition of this right runs parallel to a natural and instinctive inclination of man himself.

It is an instinct that we also observe in many other creatures which we often see saving for their offspringthat which helps them grow and live on.

- Islam also santioned the principle of differences in wealth. The Almighty says in the Holy Qur'an (in Surat Al-Nahl) (the Bees 71)) that He preferred some people to others in their earnings, and says (sura 6: 165) that He differentiated between people in their life on this earth and raised some several degrees on others. Such differentiation is natural and agrees with the nature of life itself because people differ in intelligence, in the effort they exert and in health, they differ in their lot in this world and in their success in their work. Furthermore guaranteeing this right makes people compete for obtaining yet more earnings thus providing the incentive for the progress and development of the economic resources of society.

_ Islam does not mean by the above however, that society should include two groups of people, one with immense riches and the other exceedingly poor, for it decreed that a certain part of the wealth of the rich is the poor people's rightt through Zakat of which we talked at length before.

- Islam- when sanctifyng such principles- because of their suitability to human life and appropriateness to human nature, took all precautions for their preservation and protection, by deterring all transgressors attempting to infringe on such principles through stealing or usurpation.

- Islam also acknowledged the right of man to having his wealth inherited by his children and devised a discipline for inheritance that realises justice among children, male and female.

- Islam views money basically as having a social function, which lies mainly in what it does for the good and progress of the society of man. To assert this principle in the spirit of man, it attributes all

wealth to God. He is the owner of all things and He employs all energies for the good of life and the living, and calls on people to spend of the money that He has chosen to give them and says in the Holy Qur'an: "Give them something yourselves out of the means which God has given to you.." (sura 24: 33)

- Islam does not approve of blocking wealth or hoarding it as this prevents it from carrying out its social function. Money is to be unleashed, so to speak, for dealing with and spending. This is the essential role in the Moslem economic system. The Holy Qur'an has threatened that torture will be the lot of those who treasure money and refrain from spending it in the pursuit of godly purposes. It also condemns the interest system for it advocates the hoarding of money for an interest towards which no effort is exerted or work done.

- Investing money in ways that are illigitimate as for instance giving it as a bribe or using it in usurping other people's rights is again an act that is strongly condemned.

- In personal expenses, Islam condemns extravagance and recommends moderation, encourges expenditure for godly prurposes such as giving to the poor and to one's kin, repairing utilities and things of that nature.

This host of principles led to the Moslem State taking upon itselef providing for the poor. But this is not considered some kind of alms or gratuity, but rather a right imposed by God so long as the poor man is incapacitated and cannot earn a living. This was applied in the whole of Moslem society in the days of the first great Caliphs, and the Caliphs deeply felt the responsibility placed on their shoulders. Umar Ibn Alkhattab, the second well-Guded Caliph is said to have been seen one day looking rather depressed, a thing that was noticed by one of his rulers who promptly asked: "Why are you looking so worried and depressed Emir of the Faithful?" And Umar replied "I am worried on account of what I am in and what I carry. There isn't one in this nation

to whom I am not obliged to have his right reach him without his writing to me or asking me."

Another story that is told of Umar is that he one night strolled out to see how his people were faring when he came upon a woman with two children crying and in front of the three of them a pot perched on a fire. He then asked her if he could enter her humble abode. The woman nodded, "Yes" without knowing who he was. Umar then said: "Why are the young ones weeping?" To this the woman said: "Because they are hungry."

The Caliph asked again: "And what are you cooking in the pot on the fire?" And the woman answered: "Water to silence them with till they fall asleep," then raising her eyes to heaven added: "May God be the judge between us and 'Umar!" On hearing this, Umar cried: "Mercifl God, how could 'Umar know you are in such a state!" and the woman said: "How could he be responsible for us and not know about us!" Umar then hastened to the treasury from where he took food which he carried himself to the woman. When one of his men stepped into his way offering to carry the food for him, he refused saying: "And will you carry my wrongdeeds for me on the Day of Judgement!"

From such a story one realizes that the woman involved knew that she had an unquestionable right to be taken care of by the state and was blaming the Caliph for he had assumed the responsiblity but nevertheless remained ignorant of hers and her children's condition, We also sense from the same story the very strong feeling of responsiblity the Caliph had, so strong in fact that he indsited on carrying the food to the woman himself to atone for what he had unwittingly committed.

The things that the ecoomic system of Islam guaranteed for all people included among other things, food, clothing and housing, and this at a decent level for a poor man in Islam was not a beggar who

stretched out his hand asking for alms but rather the man whose income did not rise to the minimum amount suitable for living.

But measures taken by the state might take a bit of time or fall short of alleviating the suffering of the needy; in such a case, Islam deems that the rich are duty-bound to hasten to meet such needs, each in his own sphere of influence. Prophet Muhammad said in this connection: "It is not a believer who spends the night with his hunger slaked while his neighbour's remains hungry with the former fully knowing about it." The Prophet also said: "Whoever has an excess of food is to go with it to that who hasn't any".

As to the stance of the Islamic Economic system in as far as other economic doctrines prevalent in today's world are concerned, one would say that though Islamic economy aims at maintaining economic justice between people, yet it is the farthest of doctrines from communism for Islam sanctions individual ownership and upholds the principle that differences between people in possessing money is a matter that the very nature of man and life demands. It also gives the entire wealth of a man on his death to his offspring.

Islam, contrary to communism, maintains, that ownership is intrinsic in the human spirit which has to save of today's food for tomorrow, and from all that it possesses for the benefit of the young ones when it passes away, and then on top of all that, this provides the incentive for work and development of society's resources. Islam also differs from free capitalism in that it doesn't allow monopolization, extravagance or the hoarding of wealth for in Islam wealth has a social function which is realized through money dealings and exhanges as well as through giving the poor their due.

Economy in Islam is built on cooperation and brotherliness not on fierce competition and strife. It does not antagonise large ownerships so long as these have been compiled by legal means and do their share for the public good and that of the poor and the needy. Islam un-

doubtedly has the right to be proud for it witnessed in its early years many of its men acummulate immense riches through toil and hard work and then give it all to the state to expend in the name of God on the Moslem nation.

It is recounted in the annals of Islam that 'Uthman Ibn 'Affan, the third well-Guided Caliph once received in trade great quantities of Cereals valued at tens of thousands of (dinars), and it so happened that the said trade came at a time of drought when a famine was hovering because of the drought and the stoppage of all rain for a lengthy period. Traders then came to 'Uthman and tried hard to purchase the lot for the assured great profits that this was bound to yield. Uthman then said to them: "I will give it to whoever pays what it is worth tenfold." To this the traders exclaimed: "Is there anyone who would be willing to pay ten times what a merchandise id worth!" And Uthman answered: "Yes, there is."

And the traders said: "Who is he?"

'Uthman answered: "God Almighty who rewards a good deed with ten times what it is worth." And then he instructed that the cereals be distrbuted gratis on all people.

Sayings that are recounted about the Prophet in this connection are numerous. One of these is His saying that he who monopolized food for forty days has forsaken God and God would likewise forsake him."

Islam denounees cheating, depreciation of people's possessions and the acquiring of money through trading in human flesh and people's honour.

Prophet Muhammad, the founder of the first Moslem government used to say that he was the father of each and every Moslem man and Moslem woman, "so whoever-on passing away-left wealth behind,

his wealth goes to his heirs, those who left debts or poor children are to come to me."

Imam 'Ali Ibn-Abi Tâleb saiid: "God Almighty has imposed on them. It is therefore right that God should exact retribution on them on the Day of Judgement and inflict upon them the torture they deserve".

With such a unique balance of humanism, the Moslems lived their most glorious eras and offered the world that flocked into Islam justice, fraternity, equality and sufficiency.

# #

Chapter 7

Counsel in Governing

The theory of government in Islam originated from a cardinal principle; namely that God is the Creator of the universe with both man and the things that made his life possible on this earth. He is also the possessor of all creation and the Master of its destiny, and that the future of this univirse and what God wills and nothing and nobody can stop it or reverse it.

The Holy Qur'an, the Book of Islam stipulates that obedience to God in all His directives should be absolute. THe Holy Qur'an instructs the faithful to follow meticulously what directives God has descended and none other's.

The cardinal principle for govermant as viewed by the Holy Qur'an is for government to hold God and His Messenger supreme and derives its power to govern from Him ruling in His name and the name of Prophet Muhammed.

The proper Caliphate (succession after the Prophet) is not for an

individual, a family or a group of people but for entire society with all its members of the individuuals it is made up of, so each and every individual in a Molem society shares in the governing and in the Caliphate as the Qur'an verses which say that God chooses all human beings to be His successors on earth. Furthermore, the Holy Book states that no one and no class of people has any right to deprive Moslems of their right to governing and to Caliphate and having it all in his hands, claiming the Caliphate and the power were all his and nobody else. This shared-by-all state must be obeyed though its obedience is bound within the circle of good deeds and wholesome acts, so that such a state should no longer br obeyed if it orders that evil acts be committed or blasphemous deeds be done. The Qur'an therfore instructs Moslems to cooperate in doing good and fearing God and not do so in committing evil things or acts of hostility.

Again Islam deems it necessary that the system adopted by a state whether from the point of view of its establishment, of electing its president and the responsible figures it, or from the point of setting its legal procedures, that all this should be decided upon through the counselling of the faithful among themselves, regardless of whether this counselling is to take place directly or through representatives of the people. The Qur'an's stipulation here is what came in Surat Al-Shura "that God instructs that things are to be resolved through consulatation among people." (sura 42: 38).

Islam however laid down conditions for those who assumed authority in a Moslem state:

1- To be faithful to God and the responsibilties placed on his shoulders.

2- Not to be from among those known for their tyranny and cruelty; those who are not always mindful of God and who violate His rulings.

3- Not to be lowly ingnorant chaaracter but a mature rational thinker with understanding and insight, enjoying a sound mind and a sound body, to be able to carry out the responsibilites of governing.

THe constitution of ruling according to the letter of the Holy Qur'an is based on the following prinicples:

- Obedience to God and His Messenger precedes any other obedience.

- Obedience to the ruler or governor comes after obedience of God and His Messenger.

- People have the right to discucss matters with governor and government and also have the right to differ with either or both.

- Resolving differences is to be based on what came in the Holy Book and the saying of the Prophet.

Islam does not specify a certain system for counselling or representation, but stresses the general principle of mutual consultation and leaves modes of its emplementation and the different styles to carry it out to the people, each society according to its own circumstance at different times.

The judiciaary in Islam is free and independent of any interference, pressure of influence and pass judgement with no consideration except to justice and to what God and His Messenger instruct.

The over-all objective of the Moslem state is to try and attain two goals one is to establish justice between people and exterminate all injustice, the second is to observe prayers as God willed, to give out Zakat, to eradicate evil and demounce inebriety which is the most detestable thing to God. In short the state is to carry ou what came in the Holy Qur'an about those to whom God subjugates the earth, they are to observe their prayers, give out Zakat, proclaim benvolence and shun liquor.

The responsibility of governing in Islam is set in a number of basic principles:

1- The duty protecting people's lives as the Qur'an has stated when it spoke of refracining form killing a human, being a thing God has ordered us not to do unless there is a verified reason for it.

2- Protection of the rights to ownership as the Holy Qur'an has ordered us not to eat up people;s money wrongfully.

3- Protection of people's dignity and privacy for the Holy Qur'an instructs us not to mock anyone or enter homes that are not ours or spy on anyone's private life.

4- The state is to protect the right of people to object to injustice. The Holy Quran says that God dislikes evil pronouncement except against unfairness.

5- The state is to guarantee the right to proclaim benevolence and to forbid drunkenness, which we may otherwise call the right to criticize.

6- The state is to guarantee the right of holding meetings or public gatherings, provided that these are for doing good and rightful things and not for sowing the seeds of dissension and strife between people. The Holy Quran says:

"Let there arise out of you a band of people (a nation) inviting to all that is good, enjoining what is right, and forbiding what is wrong. They are the ones to attain felicity". (Sura 3 : 104)

As to those who disunited and differed after what had come to them from God the Holy Qur'an condemns them and warns them with torture.

7- The state is again to guarantee freedom of faith according to the principle that came in the Qur'an that there was no coercion in re-

ligion, and that the call for anything should be within the limits of sound and benevolent arguing.

8- The right of every individual not to be subjected to any penal measures without indisputable evidence of his or her guilt. The Holy Qur'an (Sura 49 : 6) warns us against believing malevolent persons who untruthfully accuse others lest an innocent person be punished unjustly.

9- The right of the poor and the needy that the state should provide them with the necessities of living as the Holy Qur'an says:"And in their wealth and possessions (is appointed) the right of the needy, him who asks, and him who (for some reason) is prevented from asking". (sura 70: 24-25).

10- The right of all people to be treated with equality and impratiality with no preferences or privileges to anyone.

As against these duties which Islam has placed on the shoulders of the Moslem Government, it has granted it certain rights which the citizens have to observe, these rights may summed up in the following :

1- The right of those in charge of the state to be obeyed by its subjects.

2- The right that citizens should not attempt to destroy what is right of public matters.

3- To cooperate in doing what is good and benevolent.

4- To have a free will and ready to defend it.

From the above one can draw the picture of the government in the Moslem state as follows:

- This state is established on a contractual basis between a free people whose individuals enjoy equality and fraternity and the people in charge.

- That the constitution of such a state emanates from rulings and laws set by God in His Holy Book or inspired his Messenger with.

- That this government is conducted by a collective will embracing all the individuals in the society.

- The change of government is linked to the people's satisfaction with it and its meticulous following of God's order of proclaiming benvolence and condemnig the objectionable such as drunkenness and adultery.

- That it is a state is established to realise benevolent tendencies and inclination and does not condone race, colour, language or the like.

- Fear of God and His oberdience is the prevailing characteristics that guide government and its rulers, so it has to stick to the path of justice and fair judement in all public matters.

- The main principles of such government are the realization of equality in rights and duties and the provision of equal opportunities for all. cooperation with all individuals in doing good so that this copperation should do away altogether with neediness and destitution as God has instructed.

- This government should seek mutual consultation affairs, mindful always of what God has ordained.

- The obedience of such government by its people is one of its rights except if and when it goes against God's orders, for then no obedience should be observed.

- Observing rulers' conduct, voicing opinion and criticizing government behaviour is a right that Islam guarantees for all Moslems.

- In matters that the Qur'an and the Sunnah have not government will have the right to legislate according to the times and the requirements of the development of life, and withen the rules of legislation .

# # #

Chapter 8

Ethics

Ethics is an individual's mode of behaviour or what his conduct should be in his treaatment of other individulas, both through his doings and his saying. Islam has accorded ethics its greatest attention, so that it could be said it has left no major or minor ethical issue, hidden or apparent, in relation to a good person, that it hasn't taken up, redircting the old modes of setting the individul straight and reshaping society on bases of benevolence and gooness. Such ethics in its totality, as it came in the Holy Quran and in the doings and saying of the Prophet Muhammad is in fact the exemplay means towards ideal human perfection.

Islam urges man to be patient, truthful, benevolent, generous, faithful, honest, modest, tolerant, forgiving, lenient, kindly and pure. It also urges him to tell the truth and work for its triumph. Islam again urges him to tell the truth and work for its triumph. Islam again urges that we be just and unprejudiced, kind to the poor and the weak, to meet malevolence with benevolenve and to cooperate with others in

doing good and benevolent and to cooperate with others in doing good and benevolent and to cooperate with others in doing and benevolent thingsd, and to advocate goodness and keep away from the objectionables such as drinking.. etc.

Islam also calls for mercifulness, for moderation and for purity of one;s body, one's clothes. and for respect of the rights of the others in their blood, their honour and their wealth. It denoounces all negative deeds and unethical behaviour such as lying, betrayal, treason, haughtiness, vanity, falsified testimony, extravagance, avariciousness, oppresion of the weak, adulttery and selfishness,. It rejects cruelty or togetherness in evil and criminality and the spreading of licentiousness and aggressiveness.

On secretive quesions, i.e things that are in the hearts and minds of men, Islam denounces flattery in the sense that one shows or makes public what in his heart he knows to be untrue. It condemns hiding or suppressing the truth and not readily saying it out load.

Islam also calls on one to be polite and mannerly in his dealings and speech with others, and that one should not be gruff or coarse and that in arguing he shouldn't be rough but argue nicely and politely.

And Islam always keeps the door open for the wrongful people for penance and repentance so that one may receive God's forgiveness and mercy and begin a new page.

The source of perfection in ethics, as it came in Islam, is due to the fact that its source is God Almighty the All-Wise, All-knowing, All-Able, that His aim is the good of makind, and that because of that He sets him the highest and noblest of examples, higher than the customary and the traditional.

Islam stipulates that God is the highest of examples in all things. And that it is the duty of every Moslem to set himself His example in every thing he says, does or thinks within the realm of the ability of man, for Islam does not ask except what is in man's power.

Ethics in Islam may not be attributed to a doctrine or measured with any criterion that humanity has known. Islamic ethics have no all-inclusive criterion for strength, or for benefiting all nations or just one of these nations. What is more, it does not acknowledge any one of these as being the right one so that it may be preferred to the other aspects of human life in its perpetual endeavour to attain perfection and to model itself on the supreme example of the Creator.

If Islam is said to love the strong man and instructs him to equip himself with the stength of both body and soul, we find Islam on the other hand asking such strength to show pity and kindness to the weak and generosity to the orphans and the needy. Islam again hates strength that tends to be brutal, oppressive or bordering on conceit, or showiness. Islam commends however, striking the happy meduim, that is, being moderate or whatever lends itself to that, as in spending money for instance; Islam instructs that one should not be extravagant and spends too musch, but at the same time one shouldn't be too thrifty or avaricious but be medium between this and that. Yet in spite of all that, we find Islam commending unreservedly limitless spending in doing good and in giving for God's sake. No moderation is recommerdel by Islam when matters are linked with doing good and benevolent things. Again Islam dislikes one to be too humble and submissive, yet it orders man to be just that when it comes to his parents; the Holy Qur'an says when speaking of the way parents are to be treated:

"And, out of kindness, lower to them the wing of humility, and say: "My lord! bestow on them your Mercy as they cherished me in childhood...". (sura 17: 24) meaning that one should show humblness to his parents which is in fact mercifulness to them in their old age.

Moderation is clearly shown by Islam when it instructs that we work for our life on earth as if we live forever and for the life to come as if we die tomorrow, it also orders that we care for our body to keep

it healthy, and care for our soul and keep it also healthy. It is clear therefore that Islam, in its estimation of the conduct of the Moslem, sets before itself, and the Moslems, the ideal example of God Almighty, to keep in touch with Him, ad be guided by Him, as much as this is humanly possible. The Houly Qur'an says: "On no soul does God place a burden greater than it can bear,,". (sura 2: 286)

This is the best criterion that can possibly be applied in a matter like ethics for ethics in Islam cannot be measured by a benefit that accrues to an individual or a nation, or by a doctrine or a human philosophy that can judge right and can again err, but the right criterion for all time and all places is the criterion of the ideal Godly example that has come from heaven and the God of this world whose purity is above all prejudice or inclination and who is all sagacious, all elevated into the most sublume, the most perfect of pictures. And Islam which aims at ethical perfection naturally takes up social etiquette and ethics, even such ethics as those that are considered to be social graces and gentility. For instance it asks people not to enter a house without first asking the owner's permission and conveying his greetings. The Holy Qur'an says: "O you who believe, enter not houses other than your own, until you have asked permission and saluted those in them". (sura 24: 27).

It calls on Moslems when greeted to return the greeting with a better one, and for a man not to mock another or for a people not to mock other another people for the latter might be a better people. It also instructs us not to spy or talk behind people's backs. Islam also calls for people not to call one another names. The Holy Qur'an says to man: "And swell not your cheek (for pride) at men, nor wolk in insolence through the earth, for God loves not any arrogant boaster.." (sura 31: 18) and instructs him, "And be moderate in your pace, and lower your voice". and reminds him: "For the harshest of sounds without doubt, is the braying of the ass.." (sura 31: 19).

On showing kindness to children and young ones, God reminds man that he may leave young boys for whom he may fear, and that for this he should fear God and be kind to other people's children in both his doings ad sayings.

Islam, in the field of straightening people's counduct, has prohibited taking liquor or practising gambling and described them as being the work of Satan, to sow the seeds of hatred and variance between people and to have them fall into animosity and to stop them from remembering God and telling the truth.

Undoubtedly we realize the sagacity of Islam in prohibiting drinking and gambling for we all know with absloute certainty the evils and ethical, psychological, economic and health harms that such doings bring about. We would like to refer in this connection to how the prohibition of drinking and gambling developed and how it was met by people who at one time looked upon liquour as a mark of horsemanship and a means that supposedly got them nearer to their heathen gods.

Wine, liquour and the like were prohibited to Moslems in the First century after the advent of Islam. The idea of prohibition was a social one dictated by the interest of the human community which in those days was aiming at the attainment of purity and idealism in all its affairs, in order to be an example and a model to all human communities everywhere in the world.

For this reason wine, liquour and the like were prohibited twenty years after the advent of Islam. Prohibition however did not all come in one go but gradually at intervals, a matter that made Moslems take it more and more sparingly and get to hate it gradually, so that when 'Umar Ibn Alkhattâb, seeing the effect wine was having on the new society, asked God in the lifetime of the Prophet to tell them about wine. In this respect, the Holy verse was revealed.

"They ask you concernig wine and gambling, say: "In them is great sin and some profit for men, but the sin is greater than the profit.." (sura 2: 219).

So some Moslems did stop drinking altogether, and some kept at it and drank too much like addicts usually do, and the same question 'Umar had asked was reiterated, for wine did away with people's minds and moneys, and 'Umar posed to God the same question again, another Holy erse was revealed: "O you believe, approach not prayers with a mind befogged, until you can understand all that you say." (sura 4: 43)

A lot more people stopped it althogether, then it so happened that two groups of Moslems fought one another and blood was shed; each one of the groups had drunk a lot of liquour and wine. At this interval, the Holy verse of absolute prohibition was revealed. It says that wine and gambling and the like are of Satan's making and lucidly and emphatically orders people to keep away from them so that God may guide them on the road to success, and expounded by adding that Satan was trying to sow the seeds of dissension and enmity between people by way of wine and gambling to stop them from remembering God and saying their prayers. (sura 5: 90:91). At this people threw away what wine or liquour they had in the roads of al-Madina and not a drop of it remained.

It was from then on that drinking liquour became a major irreligious deed and the motive behind the most outrageous crimes, so much so that a legend is told about it. The legend says that once Satan came to a pious man that was maltreated by his servant and his wife and Satan said, "Kill that servant so that he can no longer maltreat you". And the pious man said, "How can I kill somebody without having the right to do so?" Satan then said, "Alright, you may hold this whip and beat your wife so that she would stop maltreating you," and the man said, "I am not used to beating her with my hand. So how can

I do that with a whip!" To this Satan said, "Alright, if you don't want to do this or that, you may drink a little wine and it will make you forget the maltreatment you get from her." The man found that this was easier for him, so he drank the wine ad got drunk, and his wife came to him and asked harshly why he was drinking wine and used a lot of profane words. The man then whipped his wife. His servant came to help the wife and the man hit him with a knife killing him.

We would like to deduce from Islam's experience with drinking wine several principles one of which is gradualness in prohibiting it, forming a public opinion supporting such prohibition, making use of religious orders, for finally when decisive prohibtion came, all Moslems submitted to what their religion ordered for they all wished that God be pleased with them through obeying him. They also wished to keep their society pure of all evils, whether physical or psychological, that drinking wine was one of the main factors of causing trouble.

Islam also calls on people to check themselves and resist temptation and condemnas those who do not so. It does this to purify the soul which tends to do the evil that is made attractive to it. In this connection the Qur'an says: "And for such as had entertained the fear of standing before their Lord's (tribunal) and had restrained their soul from lower distress." (sura 21: 49) and always reminds people that those who follow such wicked inclination lose their way to God and what he instructs on doing good and being virtuous.

The Qur'an also condemns greedingess and usurping people's money unjustly, and falls more heaviluy on those who eat up the wealth of orphans, and deems that the most evil of men are those who tell people to do good and refrain from doing that themselves. As regards matters of reforming man and society, Islam contains principles that the new science of psychology is consideret to be among the

greatest methods of reform. We herewith enumerate these principles and methods:

Among such priciples is the tendency towards the enlargement and not narrowness, in so far as questions of worship are concerned, and regarding questions related to general and social circumstances and living conditions in general, for we find that Islam in all such cases tends towards kindliness and tolerance and the essence of things and not their form or appearance. It tends, that is, not to impose strictness in matters of worship and to lighten the burden of slips or small errors in worship as long as such mistakes do not bring harm to one's life or religion and so long as good intentions were behind it all and not deliberate malpractice. Islam took the view that necessities allow for otherwise unpermitted things and denounced the prohibiting of enjoyment of the good things God has given to us on this earth as well as the ornament of this life. The Almighty invited Moslems to eat, drink and dress themselves in whatever is beautiful, good and ornamental for it is all God's blessings for them on this earth.

Islam then stipulates that what it prohibits are what is evil and malicious-what is apparent of these and what is hidden-what is criminal and what is harmful to man, and above all heathenism. And Islam doesn't ask for more than which is in one's power to give and doesn't punish one for forgetfulness or for making mistakes but tends towards moderation, good intention and good wishing. Then there is, after that, penance and repentance and Islam fully opens the door to these as in opening this door, reassurance returns to the human soul which can collaps under the burden of guilt and self-accusation. The Holy Qur'an says: "And those who having done something to be ashamed of, or wornged their own souls, earnestly bring God to mind, and ask for forgivness for their sins, and who can forgive sins except God?" For such the reward is forgiveness from their Lord.." (sura 3: 135-

136) and It says: "If any one does evil or wrongs his own soul, but afterwards seeks God's forgiveness, he will find God All-Forgiving, most meciful." (sura 4:110) Then the Holy Qur'an says again: "Except for those who repent before they fall into your power, in that case, know that God is All-Forgiving, All Merciful". (sura 5: 34).

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Chapter 9

The Family and Human Spirit in Islam

The family is of the greatest value to the life of the human society, for it is the principal nucleus of which all societies are formed. It is also the cradle in which every child begins life and gradually grows up, depending entirely on the material and spiritual conditions that prevail the family in what he becomes responsible when he is grown into manhood and is then a Fully-Fledged member of the greater society of man.

Islam has therefore accorded it great care and set out for it principles and legislations that safekeep it and realize for it the potential to be the best environment for man's upbringing imparting him with all positive capabilities that build the best human relations in the society in which he is destined to live.

In pre-Islamic days, compared to man a woman had a lowly status from her very birth till the day she died. She was hated by the father to whom she was born, for in those days a father hated to have a fe-

male baby, and when that happened, he would hide his face for the shame of what had been born to him. A girl was denied the legacy of her father, and a wife that of her husband.

Rich folk owned women and slave girls whom they kept to trade in their chastity and to force them into prostitution, and often in wars, women, whether girs or wives, fel into the misfortune of being the losing party and were taken into slavery and sold like sheep in the market place. A practice that became quite common in some tribes was a motive for the parent to bury his small girl alive for fear of the shame she might bring upon the family when she grew older, or again what disgrace poverty might cause her to bring onto her people.

Then Islam came and gave the woman her right in her father's husband's and son's legacies. It also legislated marital laws for a sound married life. A girl's marriage was placed in her hands, so that she no longer could be forced into a marriage she didn't want. Islam also stipulated that for the marriage to be legal in the sight of Islam, the woman's acceptance must be witnessed by two people.

As to the man, the Prophet counselled that ethics should be the base for the acceptance of the would-be groom, that is, if someone whose character and conduct are acceptable to us, and asked for the hand of one's daughter in marriage, then we are to be agreeable.

Now we pass on to married life and the life of a family which Islam intended to be precisely on equal footing between the two parties that make it up, i.e. the man and the woman. The Holy Qur'an expounds the bases of matrimony when the Almighty says: "And among His signs in this, that he created for you mates from among yourselves, that you may dwell in tranquility with them, and He has put love and mercy between your hearts". (sura 30: 21)

Islam has thus defined marriage's function in that it is our path to quietude and tranquility and that its goal is to sow the seeds of love

and compassion in the society, and then comes the other objective when the Qur'an says referring to marriages, other objective: "And made for you, out of them, sons and daughters and grand childern", (sura 16: 72) meaning of course that this other objective is reproduction, i.e. the formation of the succession of the oncoming generations, a necessary process for the continuation of the human race, within the circle of kindliness and compassion.

We then come to expounding family relations as laid down by Islam to realize the family's objective which is the preservation of mankind, and the diffusion of love, quietude and compassion amidst membersof the human race.

We know of course how in pre-Islamic societies, marital relationships were linked to the stronger party which was almost invariably the man. In those societies it was the man who chose the wife he wanted and his will was never thwarted, and it was in his power to end this relationship whenever he wanted. And there were societies which allowed relations between men and women without the sanctity of marriage. Men also married as many women as they pleased.

In modern society, we all know how the percentage of unmarried women soared and how sexuall relations are practised out of wedlock which is a matter that Islam denounces, and so do all other oivine religions, for it is a practice that destroys all family life.

We find God's Messenger Muhammad emphasizing the importance of marriage, considering it a means that leads man to righteousness to the preservation of religion and society. He says that the man who marries preserves half his religion and He instructs him to fear God Almighty through preserving the other hlaf. The Holy Qur'an categorically forbids adultery and inflicts the heaviest punishment on adulterers and reiterates in more than one verse that adultery is a criminal pestilence, and a worngful path that God forbids the faithful to enter.

Islam did however legislate against lots of customs that are against human nature but were nevertheless pursued in pre-Islamic days. It prohibited marrying mothers, step-mothers, sons, sisters, aunts, niece or mothers-in-law. It also legislated that prior to marriage the man must give the woman a dowry which is specified only by the satisfaction of the two parties, a matter that helped raise the woman's position in life after it completely lost it in pre-Islam days.

While in pre-Islamic period, hatred and variance dominated marital life to the extent that love, quietude and tranquility might vanish altogether, here Islam urges reconciliation. If this proves impossible Islam insists that two emissaries, one from the husband's family and one from the wife's should sit together to try and bring about the required reconciliation. failing this, Islam legislated that a separation could be effected as an atmosphere of variance and strife can never be conducive to the healthful upbringing of the young ones in addition to the negation of the love, quiet and tranquility which are the basic objictives of all marriages. When Islam permitted divorce, it stipulated that it was the most hated permissabe with the Almighty, and the return of the husband to the wife, particularly if it was proven that a baby was on the way.

There remains a question that has been the subject of a lot of talk and lengthy discussions in which the truth mingled with fantasies, and that is the question of a man having several wives, its causes, limitations, and conditions imposed on it, which make it in fact an xtremely difficult if not impossible proposition, It was repeatedly thought that the question of a man having several wives was something that Islam innovated whereas it was a fact of Arab life and a practice that Arabs pursued long before the advent of Islam. Men then married eight, and in some instances, ten wives. The reason however, was an obvious one for a tribal society is forever attempting to increase the number of their offspring. Islam was therefore confronted with a factual problem imposed by long-standing tribal traditions. Islam, which came in the

seventh century A.D., allowed polygamy according to a Qur'anic verse which says that men who fear being unjust to orphans may marry more than one wife. The maxim here, as in the old Testement is in caring for the orphans whose father dies. The Qur'an then adds: "But if you fear that you shall not be able to deal justly (with them) then only one.." (sura 4:3) The Qur'an here is indeed lucid for it says in another place that people though, are incapable of being just to women regardless of how anoxous they might want to be. We find therefore that the stance the Qur'an maintains is nearer to prohibition than permission. But within the great limitations imposed on allowing more than one wife, we would like to ask these questions:

a- What stance could a man be married to a barren women take in a tribal society where having children is a matter of life or death?

b - What is a society to do if it engaged in a war and lost a great percentage of its male population and its women folk became a lot more numerous than its male members?

c - What would a married man do whose wife falls victim to an incurable disease?

The alternatives to all such questions, barring taking another wife, would either be repression adultery or permissiveness, i.e. sexual relationships outside the sanctity of marriage.

In talking about the human spirit, the Holy Qur'an says that God has created man to be his successor on Earth, and that He subjugated what is on it to be under his sway, and in order that man may utilize what the earth has to offer, the Almighty has endowed man with the mind, to help him understand all the realities of things and use them to his benefit. It appears therefore that God looks upon man as the master of the universe. Islam in turn considers all people without differences or privileges, just one nation. The Qur'an says:

"It is He who created you from a single person and made his mate

of like nature in order that he might dwell with her in love". (sura 30: 21)

The Qur'an also says that differences between people in language, colour and so forth does not prevent the human togetherness of all people. And if such differences are natural, we are reminded that God has endowed man with the ability to adjust to his environment and respond to it, for such variance should not be a cause for fighting or struggle, but as Islam stipulates, a cous for Increased acquaintanceship and cooperation so that every people would benefit from the other and each impart what good it has realized to the other. In this connection the Qur'an says: "O Mankind: We created you from a single (pair) of a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes that you may know each other (Not that you may despise each other)." (sura 49: 13)

Because of that Islam fought all kinds of differenciation brought about for reasons of difference in colour, race, or language, for all people are the sons of one man, Adam, and one woman, Eve, and there were no attributes that singles out one race except those that the environment has stamped on people and the requirements of man in such environment. There, deduced from that, is another principle which was accorded no recongition by Islam and that is regional nationalism that motivates the people of some regions towards thinking of overpowering or subjugating others and considering themselves superior to them. This reminds us of what some leasders do in this era of trying to impose supremacy, and plunge the world in wars and bloodshed as a resul. For this reason Islam calls on people not to cooperate with crime or aggression but cooperatein doing good and benevolent deeds. The Holy Qur'an instructs people to: "Help you one another in righteousness and piety, but help you not one another in sin and rancour.." (sura 5: 2).

The Messenger of Islam Muhammad did carry out this humane

principle when he emigrated to AL-Madina and concluded an agreement with its Jewish population based on doing good, warding off evil, protecting virtue and collaborating in crushing evil-doers.

Such human spirit does in fact constitute the bulwark of establishing peace among people, and eradicates strife and differences between peoples and nations.

Islam bases human relations, whether between individuals or groups and nations, on tolerance, without surrendering to evil or evil-doers. The Qur'an asks us to ward off enmity with a spirit of benevolence and brotherliness in humanity, for warding it off in this way engenders amity and friendliness, and though Islam condemns evil and punishes evil-doers, the goal behind this is the safekeeping of humanity as a whole from the life-destructive powers of evil. The Almighty says in the Holy Qur'an "In the law of Equality, there is (saving of) life to you, in retalition, "O you men of understanding.." (sura 2: 179)

Tolerance and forgiveness are almost sublime when they come from a vuctor and at the time of victory. When the Prophet Muhammad conquered Mecca and it had earlier so harmed and tortured him, that he and his companions fled the town leaving behind their wealth and thleir kin, the Prophet asked its people: "what do you think I will do to you?" In answer they said: "A forgiving brother and a forgiving nephew." meaning the Prophet in either case, and Prophet Muhammad said: "I say to you what Brother Joseph said to his own brothers, that no blame is to be put on them. May God forgive you. Go-you are all free".

With such tolerance and divine forgiveness, the Prophet made it possible for Islam to implant in the hearts of its followers this almost divine human spirit, for they followed in the Prophet's steps and went the way He did, in his life ad after his death.

It was also this principle that made him adopt, nay insist upon, the principle of the freedom of faith, and that respect be accorded to that. This has prevented the destruction of human relations as a consequence of differences in religion for it contained all such difference, which is again yet another reason way Islam spread so wide, so far and so rapidly for it was a world Religion with a sublime code of ethics that stressed immeasurably the spirit of human brother liness amongst all mankind.

The great Caliphs followed meticulously in the Prophet's footsteps. 'Umar Ibn Al-Kattâb is said to have learned that one of his rulers in Syria had ordered a church to be pulled down and a mosque to be built in its place. When this reached 'Umar's ears, he ordered that the mosque be pulled down and the church to be rebuilt and dismissed his ruler.

If we add to that, that Islam contrived to prevent Moslems from occupying other people's territory, or take their means of production, and to have them only levy those taxes imposed on Moslems and non-Moslams, even in cases when the Moslems were subjected to aggression, 'Umar would not allow the usurpation of the land of the beaten party and ordered that the land stay in the hands of its owners and to their children after them.

Fighting though, wasn't forbidden by Islam for fighting in Islam was for the sake of God, was for spreading his words, and disseminating mercy, justice and brotherliness amidst mankind. However Islam did not direct the Faithful to fight except when they suffered an injustice and were unjustly thrown out of their land. The Almighty said in the Holy Qur'an: "God only forbids you, with regard to those who fight you for your faith, and drive you out of your homes", (sura 60: 8).

Furthermore, Islam calls for the deepening of the human relations between Moslems and non-Moslems on certain bases which include:

1 - Love, pure and abslute, is the first of these callings. It is in the eyes of Islam the key to all benevolence. The Prophet says that the best thing a man can do is to love his fellow human being, i.e. his fellow in God, meaning that this is the way that God's instructions and directives prevail, thus ensuring benevolence among people on this earth, and then he swears that none of the people of this world will go to heaven until he becomes faithful and that they won't be faithful unless they love each other first.

2 - Mercifulness is another one of these attributes, and mercifulness in Islam represents the first ingredient so to speak, that is form human brotherliness. Prophet Muhammad syas that who does not show mercy is likewise never shown mercy and that God is not merciful to thase who do not show mercy to their fellow-men.

3 - Gratitude and geatefulness are among these attributes, for they deepen the meaning of love and mercifulness and the meaning of humanity in general. Gratitude to one's parents, beginning with one's mother, then father, then sister and brother, then other relatives, and so on, and so forth.

With these attributes, the human spirit went deepen into Moslems and they became, following the instructions of their religion, and the living examples set before them, the most merciful of people and the most faithful and humane to humanity at large.

Chapter 10

Peace and Civilization in Islam

Peace is another value of those of Islam. It is the value that has been settled in Islam since it first came to this earth, for Islam is a religion that called for love, mercifulness and the dignity of man. It is a religion that loves life and endears it to the people, for when it frees them from all that threatens their lives, it stipulates in no undoubtful manner that it advocates peace so that life may flourish and advance unerringly on the road to benevolence and progress, perpetually shaded by quietude and reassurance.

A Moslem's greeting when he meets a fellow-Moslem is: "Peace and God's mercy and blessings be upon you." Peace is again one of God's names as it thus came in the Qur'an, the Book of Islam. The very word Islam is a derivative from the Arabic word "Alsalâm" the equivalent to that which in English is 'peace'.

The Prophet says that God has made 'peace be on you' the greeting of our people to singify that this spells peace and security to peo-

ple who live with us but belong to another faith.

The Holy Qur'an says: "Ad say not to any one who offers you a salutation "You are none of a beleiver, coveting the perishable goods of this life.." (sura 4: 94).

Peace then, according to Moslem theologists, is a basic principle in Islam, and one of the values of life for God instructs us not to bedevil the earth or spread evil in it. He says in the Holy Qur'an: "Help one another in righteousness and pietry but help not one another in sin and rancour". (sura 5: 2) Furthermore He orders that we cooperate in benevalence and not in crime or aggression.

Following from the above, one can only deduce that peace in Islam is the basic mode of behaviour in human relations, for according to the Qur'an, Moslems are not permitted to wage war except in self-defense, religion or human dignity. Underneath however we enumerate those justifications which in the eyes of Islam do allow warring against people:

Case 1- Self defense and here the Holy Qur'an instructs Moslems: "God forbids you not, with regard to those who fight you...," (sura 60: 9)

Then the Qur'an adds modifying the above: "But do not transgress limits, for God loves not transgressors.." (sura 2: 190)

Then in another part of the Holy Book, It says: "if then any one transgfresses the prohibtion against you, trensgress likewise against him. But fear God, and know that God is with those who restrain themselves.." (sura 2: 194)

Ad finally It says on this important question: "But if the enemy incline towards peace, do (also) incline towards peace, and trust in God, for He is the one that hears and knows all things.." (sur 8: 61)

case 2- in which Moslems are permitted to fight the betrayal of for-

mer pledges, betrayal generally and treason. On this question, the Holy Qur'an says: Verily, God loves not any that is a traitor to faith, or shows ingratitude." (sura 22-38).

Case 3- in which Moslems are permitted to fight derives from the Amlighty's saying in the Holy Qur'an: "And fight them on until there is no more tumult or oppression, and there prevail justice and faith in God, but if they cease, let there be no hostility except to those who practise oppression.." (sura 8: 39).

What is meant by turbulace or rebellion is forcing them to desist from their religion. In other words, war is allowed here to ensure the Moslem religion and protect it from the aggression of tyrants.

It thus becomes obvious that Islam does not permit war for reasons of aggression, oppression or aggrandizements or again for forcing people to embrace Islam but permitted it only for rpelling aggression, preventing others to force Moslems to desist from Islam and for betrayal of pledges.

The Moslem's conduct in war is characterized by mercifulness and compassion to the enemy when defeated, for to Moslems-who only fought when war was forced upon them-invariably demonstrated a keenness on the preservariation of human life and therfore always befriended their antagonists and were patient with them.

Prophet Muhammad left his disciples a will on this question in which he said: "March in the name of God and with the blessings of His Messenger. do not slay an old man, a child or a woman, and do not betray or commit a treachery, but do good and right for God loves ightufl and benevolent people".

Islam however does not hold with the principle of similar or likewise conduct or behaviour, but invariably sticks to the theory that ne's treatent of others should always be virtuous, always in complete ccord with hman values and human principles. If your enemy does

not observe any ethical values r or human principles, if he kills children aged people and women, if he commits rape and soils the sanctity of marriage through committing adultery. Islam prohibits Moslems to do likewise, for Islam Persists in obligating Moslems to stick meticulously to human and ethical vluses. If the enemy mutilates the bodies of the dead, Islam categorically denounces it. This has become an established tradition in all wars throughout the ages. The French historian Gustave Le-Bon noted that and held a comparison between Richard's behaviour in the Crusades and that of Salah El-Din when the Former killed three thousand Moslems who had surrendered though he had pledged not to, and the latter when he took greater numbers of Chirstian war-prisoners and let them go for he found he could not feed them and did not want to bear before God the responsibility of starving them to death, as Islam instructed not to starve war-prisoners. And when Salah El-Din conquered Jerusalem, he inflicted aboslutely no harm on its soldiers, and again when Philip, King of France and Richard, the Lion-Hearted fell ill, he sent them doctors, medicine and food.

It remains however, to talk a little, about building up the edifice of civilization as Islam instructed. To begin with, Islam saw civilization-whether work, act, or prodction, as a means to attain the flourishing of life and its progress towards a state of benevolence and doing good. Any work, regardless of its value, that does not relate to doing good, could not be termed conductive to civiliszation.

Civilization, in this sense, includes every act, material or spiritual, that realises benevolence and progress for humanity, provided that this act, be it production or otherwise, be again of a general human nature belonging to humanity as a whole ad not to one specific nation or one limited group of people.

Man alone is the creature on whom God bestowed the faculty of recognisance and endowed with mental powers that enable him to un-

derstand natural phenomena, to exploit nature and extract what energies and potential it contains and use it all for the progress of human life and its elevation.

Islam emerged in the seventh century A.D. after the Roman civilization had crumbled down under the feet of the barbarians. If the Byzantine Empire had carried the legacy of the Greek ad Roman Empires, its civiliszation had also been subected to thought and military strife with the state of Persian a matter that had rendered it unabe to leave behind of its production and civilizational works indeed a pretty few.

There remained the civilizations of the Orient, those of India and China which, it is possible to say, carried a local colour that made their effect markedly weak when it comes to humanity at large.

In addition to these, there was in Alexandria a school of philosophy that inherited some of the Greek legacy and developed it with new thought which dressed the old philosophy in a new guise, though in its essence, it stayed the old Greko-Roman philosphy.

This then was the civilizational impetus that humanity had received prior to the emergence of Islam and its spreading in the world. It is unquestionably true to say that Islam deeply affected the general current of human civilization, citations from both Western and Eastern historians more than validate this Statement. Justaf Lion says that the Arabs proved ever since they contacted the outside word that they were a people of a sound and mature mind capable of being civilized, unlike the Barbarians who captured the Roman Empire but were unable to start any new civilization. The Moslem Arabs however did-on contact with the outside world-establish a new civilization and contributed enormously to science, art and literature, a matter that has had a great effect on the progress of human life and the development of human civilization.

It is of course possible to compare the role of Moslems as a nation with that of the civilizations of the old worls, as those of the Assyrians, the Persians, the Greeks and the Romans, for most of these civilizations have practically vanished and left only remains of crumbled down structures; their religions ad inscriptions became fables of the past, but the fundamentals of the Islamic Arab civilzation in religion, science, art, literature and values remained so highly effective in the life of man till this very day.

Tebrie asserts that it was the Arabs, who through the influence of their ethical values, disciplined and refined the Barbarian heathens who had done away with the Roman civilisation, and that it was the Moslems who opened the doors to Europe to get to know things that it had not known of scientific, literary and philosophical data of ancient Greece. They, meaning the Arabs, asserts Mr. Tebrie were the fathers of science and civilization in Europe for six centuries. Their translations of scientifi books, their own additions to them and deductions from their data which were ade through methods of experimental science remained the only source for teaching in the universities of Europe for 500 years. Tebrie furthermore states that had it not been for the appearance of the Moslem Arabs on the stage of history, the revival of Europe and its civilization would have been delayed several centuries.

H.G. Wells says in his Outline of History on the topic of the civilizational effect of the human mind on the future of the human race that fate had thrown in Arab intelligence into the width ad breadth of the world in a manner that was much quicker that it had done with the Greek mind nearly a thousand years earlier. The enlightenment of thought which the Moslem Arabs brought into the whole west of China was indeed great, and so was the tearing up of old thoughts and the springing up of new ones.

It is perhaps right to ask here why Islam and the Moslems have

had such a great civilizational effect, that far exceeded anything that came before!

One notable point that comes to mind in answer to this question is the unique mixture that it made of the nations it had conquered, for it formed of them all just one identifiable mixture amidst a world torn by Barbarism and bigotry, and in this way Islam was able to create a civilization that was of a world-wide nature in so far as origin was concerned, for Moslems from all those nations partook in the making of this civilisation, and those nations in turn had their effect on others that shared bounderies with them and so on and so forth.

Sideo, the science historian, says that in the period between the ninth and the fifteenth centuries, there formed a collection of data and knowledge which is indeed one of the greatest in history. There also appeared tapestries and jewellery, a new architecture and new inventions that are a concrete evidence of the wonderful intellectual activity of that age, and all this so affected Europe that it is no exaggeration to say that the Moslem Arabs were their masters in all branches of knowledge in this ear of man's history.

The emergence of Islam was naturally behind it all, for it came on to the world saturated with such a generous human nature and such spiritual and ethical values all at once, and it did not come to the Moslems or Arabs alone, and embodied with it all, its goals of freedom, humanity aspired to and hoped for.

Islam was able, through those values that showed themselves in the life of man such splendour for the first time, to transcend over the levels of nationalism and selfishness, local environment and its requirements, and again over the time being into the future, to coexist with all times and to keep human values the topmost thing that humanity cherished in all places and at all times.

The misuse of the achievements of science in the destruction of

life can be remedied through faith which has aserted in the hearts of men and in the human spirit what Islam calls for, with no discrimination between one race and another, one colour and another colour. In this connection the Frech philosopher Roger Garoudy states that Islam's effect on the world in general, and that the Christians and even the irreligious have discovered that Islam is not a religion of outward manifestations but rather of the deep human essentials.

We should try here to find out how Islam was able to disseminate this spirit in its followers in such a wide expanse on which they still live to the present day. There were of course various basic factors which lay behind this effect:

Foremost among these is that Islam called for the liberation of man from all pressures that tied him up and stopped the emergence of his powers of creation, for it liberated him from the old heathen traditions and liberated his mind from imitating his predecessors.

It stimulated his mental powers to ponder things and think about them, to contemplate the universe, firstly to know God Almighty, then to try and exploit what energies, potentials and resources there are in it for the benefit of mankind.

It does call for man to live fully, and calls again for the preservation of life. Furthermore it glorifies it and makes doing away with it the greatest of crimes.

It reconciles life's material and spiritual demands and makes the mind the judge between them, lays down the fundamentals and leaves out the details for the human mind to work them out according to their circumstances and the age they live in.

Again Islam does not impose limitations on human activities in thought, economy or work so long as this activisty is virtuous and benevolent. Islam was in fact the first to teach freedom of thought coupled with piety and religiousness.

It was for all these reasons and for the human spirit that we have expounded that only a few years after the advent of islam, the Moslem mind was daily discovering all that had been unknown behind natural phenomena, all that nature contained of creatures, energiees and potentials capable of bringing happiness to man, progress and flourishing to life, and all that at a time when ignorance and legendary tales prevailed.

The history of science will never forget names like Abû Bakr Al-Râzi, the greatests physician of the Middle Ages, or the philosopher Ibn Sînâ (Avicenna) the first to dicover the "Milz brand', "Ibn Alhitham' and his theory on the reflection of light and his minute description of the eyes which constitute some of the most important discoveries in the science of eye-sight. And there are scores of others like Al-Khuwarazmi the great mathematician, Albayrooty, the father of world-famous mathematical equations that calculate the earth's diameter and its distance away from the sun and Al-Farabi the great Moslem philosopher who is labelled the world's seconed teacher after Aristotle who was its firsst, and numerous others who so enriched our world. One great authority on the history of man's civilization is Dr. Wall Durant. He says in his book "The Story of Civilization" that Islam had remained for five centuries (from 700 to 1200 A.D.) the leader of the world in strength and discipline, directing the stretches of countries upon countries that it ruled, in ethics and disposition, in the high standard of life, and in legislating for man, in mercifulness, tolerance in religion, in literature, scientific research, medecine, philosophy ad architecture.

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Chapter 11

The Status of Knowledge in Islam

The status of knowledge in the Qur'an:

We may now draw our attention to the view of the Qur'an pertaining to knoledge in a direct manner. We will discuss the verses that dwell upon knowledge exhorting it and glorifying it. God mentions:

"Verily only those who possess knowledge.

Among His servants

Truly fear Allah."

(sura 35: 28)

The fear of the Lord which is the fruit of knowledge is one of the most important bases of Islam. It is from here that Islam sees knowledge as a necessity and not as a luxury. This in itself is an Islamic principle and an essentiality in an Islamic personality. A Muslim personality must be versed with knowledge; knowledge of the universe,

of man and of the mind. In fact in every field that this word may entail.

Where does the fear of the Lord lead?

Where do the sincere believing scholars end up? What is the import of the following verse:

"There is no god but He:

That is the witness of Allah

His Angels, and those endued

With knowledge, standing firm

On justice. There is no god but He,

The Exalted in Power, The Wise." (Sura 3: 18)

The tenet of monotheism is the fundamental principle in Islam. It is:

"I bear witness that there

Is no god but Allah

And that Muhammad is His Messenger."

The Status of Knowledge inthe "SUNNAH" of the Prophet (P.B.U.H.)

We may now allude to the teachings of the Prophet (P.B.U.H.) from where we can take a beautful pattern of conduct in matters pertaining to life in general and knowledge in particular:

"There is indeed

In the Messenger of Allah

a beautiful pattern of conduct

For you; for anyone whose hope is

In Allah and the Final Day

And who engages much

In the Praise of Allah."

Abû Hurairah reports the following:

"Whosoever relieves a believer from an affliction in this world Allah relieves him from an afflication on the Day of Judgement, and whosoever conceals a believer's shortcoming, Allah protects him both in this world and the Hereafter. Allah assists every person who is engaged in helping his brother.

"Whosoever travels in search of knowledge, Allah makes his way easy to heaven. Indeed, whenever a people gather in the house of Allah reciting and studing the Book of Allah, the angels welcome them, peace is showered upon them and Allah's mercy envelops them. Allah mentions them among those who are close to Him.

A person whose noble deeds and actions are nil can never be rescued by his noble genealogy." (In Islam deeds and not iineage count for eternal bliss.)[1] Anas bin Malik reports the following:

The learned on the earth are like the stars in the sky. Guidance is available by them during dark nights on land and sea. Once the stars disappear, the guides are on the verge of falling astray.[2]

The Type of Knowledge Advocated by the Qur'an.

And the Hadith of the Prophet (P.B.U.H.)

Some people basing their ideas on suppositions, feel that the knowledge of which the Qur'an appears so desirous is nothing but the-

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(1) Muslim, Abu Dawood, Tirmidhi, Nasâ'i Ibn Majah, Ibn Hibban-All have reported this. Hakim comments "The tradition is correct and in accordancl! with the conditions of Imam Bukhairi and Imam Muslim."

(2) Reported by Imam Ahmed.

ology. By this they mean knowledge about God, His Angels, His Books, His Messengers, the Hereafter and knowledge about religious obligations such as Prayers, Fasting, (zakat) Poor-Tax. Hajj (pilgrimage) and knowledge about Islamic Legislation and Islamic Faith.

It is a fact that Religious knowledge implies faith, morals and legislations encouraged by Islam. In fact they rank in the first division. Faith is the most essential fundamental of any religion. Man's knowledge about God and relations with Him through His Prophets is the noblest knowledge for the individual. It is also the most warthy knowledge for the security of the society and the safety of its honour, life and blood.

However, despite the fact that knowledge of Allah through His Messenger ranks the highest in Islam and in the domain of religion, the Qur'an itself tells us that the whole universe is a book of knowledge regarding God. The universe is a vast complex of natural phenomena with their complexities, precisions and natural laws. The advancement of knowledge in these fields leads to greater comprehension about God which in turn leads one to fear God all the more.

Let's ponder together on the following verse:

"Have you not seen that Allah sends down water,

From the sky?

With it

We then bring out produce

Of various colours.

And in the mountains

Are tracts white and red.

Of various shades of colour

And black intense in hue.

And so amongst man

And crowling creatures and cattle,

Are they of various colours.

Those truly fear Allah

Among His Servants

Who have been well-versed in knowledge,

For Allah is Exalted in Might, All-Forgiving."

(sura 35: 27-28)

This leads us to the fact which we discussed earlier regarding the coordination, order and creation found in this world of matter. We were forced to admit'

"Verily only those who are well-versel in knowledge

Among His servants

Truly fear Allah."

(sura 35: 28)

The Qur'an has exhorted the Muslims to pursue Knowledge in various fields regarding the universe. It exhorted them to learn about the historicity of the world which it calls "Ayyam-Allah" (The passage of time) How those who followed the teaching of God and were steadfast in their faith prospered and how those who continued in evil and sins perished. The passage of time portrays the successive lives of God's friends and the absolute dejection of those who remained the enemies of the Almighty.

"Say: Travel through the earth

And see how Allah did

Originate creation; so will
Allah produce a later creation.
For Allah has power over all thongs."
(sura 29: 20)
"Say: Travel through the earth
And see what was the end
Of those before (you)
Most of them worshipped
Others besides Allah."
(sura 30: 42)
"Do they not travel
Trough the earth, and see
What was the end
Of those before them?
They were superior to them
In strength: They tilled
The soil and populated it
In greater numbers than these
Have done: There came to them
Their Messenger with clear *signs) **That they** rejected, to their
Own destruction): it was not
Allah who wronged them, but
They wronged their own souls."

(sura 30: 9)

Have they not seen how many generations

We have destoryed them, as we have not established you,

We poured out rain

From the sky in abundance

And gave *fertile) streams

Flowing beneath their (feet)

Yet for their sins

We destroyed them,

And raied in their wake

Fresh generations

(To succeed them.)

(sura 6: 6)

The Qur'an also exhorted the Muslims to study astronomy when it adjured them by taking oaths and adjuration the position and rank of the stars are brought to light. This calls for great research, reflection and thinking. God uses the following oaths:

"By the Star when it goes down."

(sura 53: 1)

I need not swear by the positions of the stars,

And surely that is a great oath if you but know."

(sura 56: 57-76)

God says that He is the Lord of the Mighty Star.

"That He is the Lord

Of Sirnius (The Mighty star)."

(sura 53: 49).

God discusses the great precisional wonders in the system of the planets and heavenly bodies and their movements:

"It is not permitted

To the sun to catch up

The moon, nor can

The night outstrip the day

Each (just) swings along

In (its own) orbit

(according to law.)"

(sura 36: 40)

Describing His Creation, God goes on to say:

"Blessed be Allah the One

In Whose hands is Dominion

And He has power

Over all things.

"And He who created Death

And life, that He

May try which of you

Is best in deed.

And He is the Exalted

In might, the all -Forgiving."

"He Who created

The seven heavens

One above another

No want of proportion

Will you see any imperfection

In the Creation

Of (God) Most Gracious?

So turn you vision again

Can you see any rift?

"Again turn your vision

A second time: (your) vision

Will come back to you futile and exhausted."

(sura 67: 1-4)

By the oaths and adjurations of the stars and planets God has declared that He has made them subservient to man. In doing so God has bestowed great bounty upon us. The following verses illustrate this fact:

"And He has made subject

To you the sun and the moon,

Both diligently pursuing

Their courses; and the night

And the day has He (also)

Made subject to you."

(sura 14: 33)

"He has made subject to you

The Night and the Day
The sun and the moon
And the stars are in subjection
To His command:
Verily in this are signs
For men who are wise."
(sura 16: 12)

"Have you not seen how
Allah merges Night into Day
And He merges Day into Night
That He has subjected the sun
And the moon (to His Law)
Each running its course
For a term appointed
And that Allah is well acquainted
With all that you do?"
(sura 31: 29)

The significance that is concealed in these statements which Allah loves to bring forth and which man should be grateful of, lies in the following: Man should study the laws operating in the universe and the knigdom ofNature. This done, man should make them subservient to him and consequently have control over them. Eventually man may use them.

When discussing space exploration and travels to the moon, it is sheer ignorance to say that Islam opposes such a proposition. It is non-

sensical to Utter such a fallacy. The Qur'anic view pertaining to the planets and heavenly bodies is one of reality and factuality. It reduced them to their proper status while others had sanctified them and even worshipped them. Regarding those who prostrated to them and worshipped them, the Qur'an has the following to say:

"Do not prostrate to

The sun or the moon

But fall in prostration\

To Allah Who

Created them."

(41: 37)

The sun and the moon and all the plantes are mere creations of God. He is their Creator and Lord. He is lord Lord of the mighty star Sirius and is also the lord of all the planets and all the stars. He created the moon and the sun and the entire heavens which He beautified with the stars.

As the Qur'an exhorted the Muslims to study the historicity of creation, to think hard and deep on the question of the stars and the planets, in the same way it has, in general, induced them to think and ponder deeply about the universe. The Qur'anic verses assist and coordinate the efforts of man in trying to discover the laws operating in the kingdom of Nature which is God's Nature Book.

"Behold! In the creation

Of the heavens and the earth

In the alternation

Of the Night and DAy

In the sailing of the ships

Through the ocean
For the profit of mankind
In the rain which God
Sends down from the skies
And the life which He gives therewith
To an earth that is dead;
In the beasts of all kinds
That He scatters through the earth;
In the change of the winds,
And the clouds which they
Trail like their slaves
Between the sky and the earth;
(Here) indeed are SIgns
For a people that are wise."
(sura 2: 164)
"Behold! In the creation
Of the heavens and the earth
And the alternation
Of Night and Day
There are indeed Signs
For man of understanding"
(sura 3: 90)

The sura of Al- Ra'd or Thunder commences with the following Verses:

Aliph Lâm Mîm Ra These are the Signs (Verses)
Of the Book: that which
Has been revealed to yopu
From you Lord in Truth;
But most men believe not."
"Allah is He Who raised
The heavens without any pillars
That you can see. Then He is firmly
Established Himself on the Throne (Of Authority)
He has subjected the sun
And the moon (to His Law!)
Each onr runs (its course)
For a term appointed.
He does regulate all affairs,
explaining the Signs in Detail
That you may believe with certainty
In the meeting with your Lord."
"And it is He Who spread
Out the earth, and set thereon
Mountains standing firm
And (flowing) rivers; and fruits
Of every kind He made
In pairs, two and two

He draws the Night as a veil
Over the Day. Behold, verily
On these things there are Signs
For those who think."
"And in the earth are tracts
(Diverse though) neighbouring,
And gardens of vines
And fields sown with corn
And palm trees growing
Out of single roots or otherwise:
Watered with the same water.
Yet some of them we make
More excellent than others to eat.
Behold, verily in these things
There are Signs for those
Who understand!"
(sura 13: 1-4)

Out of His Grace and Mercy by way of these verses, God, showers bounties upon the whole of mankind. For the intelligent and enlightened ones He illustrates examples. He does this to induce them to make researches and studies and concentrate their attention to the omnipotence of the Creator and what He did for us.

The Companions of The Prophet (P.B.U.H.) and Knowledge.

The Muslims in encouraging and inducing people to pursue knowledge followed the Qur'an and the noble traditions of the Prophet

(P.B.U.H.) In reference it may suffice to quote Muadh Ibn Jabal as reported by Imam il-Ghazali in his book Ihuâ'u 'Ulumud-Din.

Mu'ath Ibn Jabal reports for the Prophet (P.B.U.H.) as having said.

"Seek knowledge. Seeking it purely for Allah's sake is fearing Him; Pursuing it is worshipping Him; discussing it is remembering Him; searching for it it is Jihad(1); imparting it to others is charity and spending it for the benefit of the family is affinity. All this is because knowledge is the boarderline between the lawful and unlawful; the light to the inroads to heaven; the friend in isolation; the companion in travel, the person to discuss with in solitudel the guide in happiness and sorrow; bringer of peace to the enemy, and an ornament to the intimate friend. With the power of knowledge Allah raises a people and make them leaders of virtues. Their footsteps and deeds are imitated and people conclude with their opinions. The angels show anxiousness in their frinedship and spread their wings for them. Every animate and inanimate prays for their salvation; the fish and creatures in the sea, the animals and beasts on the land, all ask for repentance for the learned. This is so because knowledge gives life to the hearts from ignorance and works as a lamp for the sight during darkness. Man reaches the rank of the selected ones by God and reaches supreme heights through knowledge both in this world and the Hereafter. To ponder in matters of knowledge is equivalent to praying throughout the night. Knowledge brings one closer to his relatives and verses him with the facts of the lafwl and the unlawful. Knowledge remains the leader while actions remain the followers. It inspires the fortunate and deprives the wicked.

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(1) Fighting for the cause 7 Allah.

ملحق (٢) :

(١) كتاب القيم فى الإسلام ـ باللغة الإنجليزية ـ ممكن الاقتباس منه بواسطة رجال الدعوة الإسلامية فى البلاد التى تتحدث اللغة الإنجليزية.

(٢) توجد ترجمة لمعانى الآيات لقرآنية والأحاديث الشريفة فى هذا الملحق..

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The Author:



Dr. Hatem was born in Alexandria in 1918, and educated at the Egyptian Military Academy and Royal Military College where he received a Master of Science Degree in Military Strategy. Then he received Master's Degree in Political and Economic Sciences from Cairo University, where he graduated with a Doctorate in Law.

He also holds an honorary doctorate from the University of Aix - en - Provence and has lectured at various universities in the United Kingdom and the U.S.A.

Politically active in his homeland, from the early days of the 1952 Egyptian Revolution, Dr. Hatem was counsellor to the late president Nasser. He was Deputy prime Minister and Minister of Culture, Information and Tourism and was appointed to the same posts by the late president Sadat in 1971, and was acting Prime Minister in 1973. He was Assistant to the President in 1974 and then Chairman of the Specialised National Councils, since 1975.

Dr. Hatem is a member of the People's Assembly and is actively involved with numerous political and cultural organizations in Egypt. He is Head of the Egyptian Political Science Society, and of the Egyptian Japanese Association, and Head of the Egyptian - Spanish Friendship Association.

He was awarded the Order of the Republic, the highest civil decoration of his country. He was also awarded the first class Decoration of the Order of the "Rising Sun" by the Emperor of Japan, the highest Japanese Decoration.

He has published several books in Arabic and in foreign languages, mainly in English.

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